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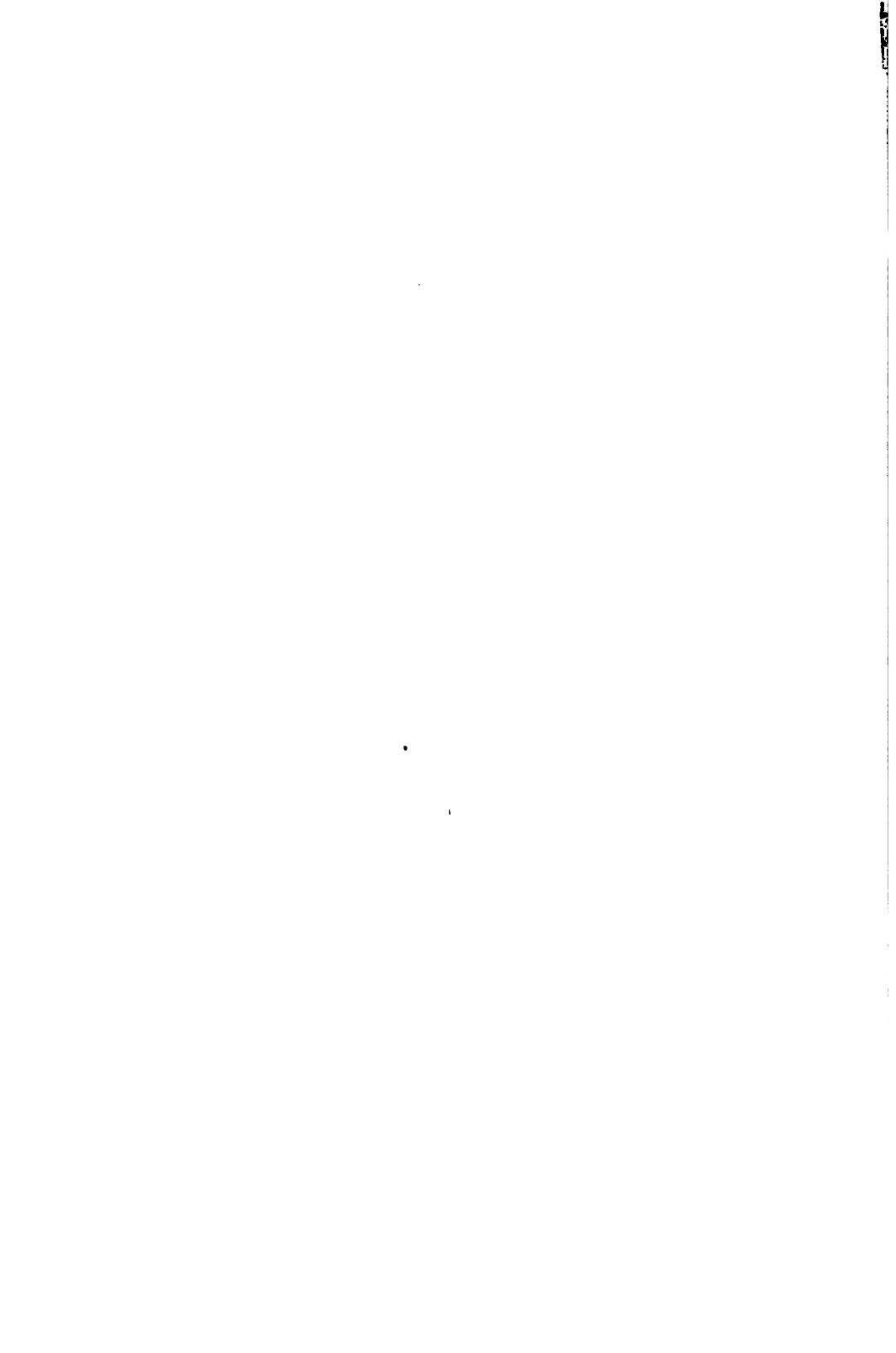
RECOLLECTIONS
OF A
ROYAL GOVERNESS







**RECOLLECTIONS
OF A
ROYAL
GOVERNESS**







The Archduchess Elizabeth.

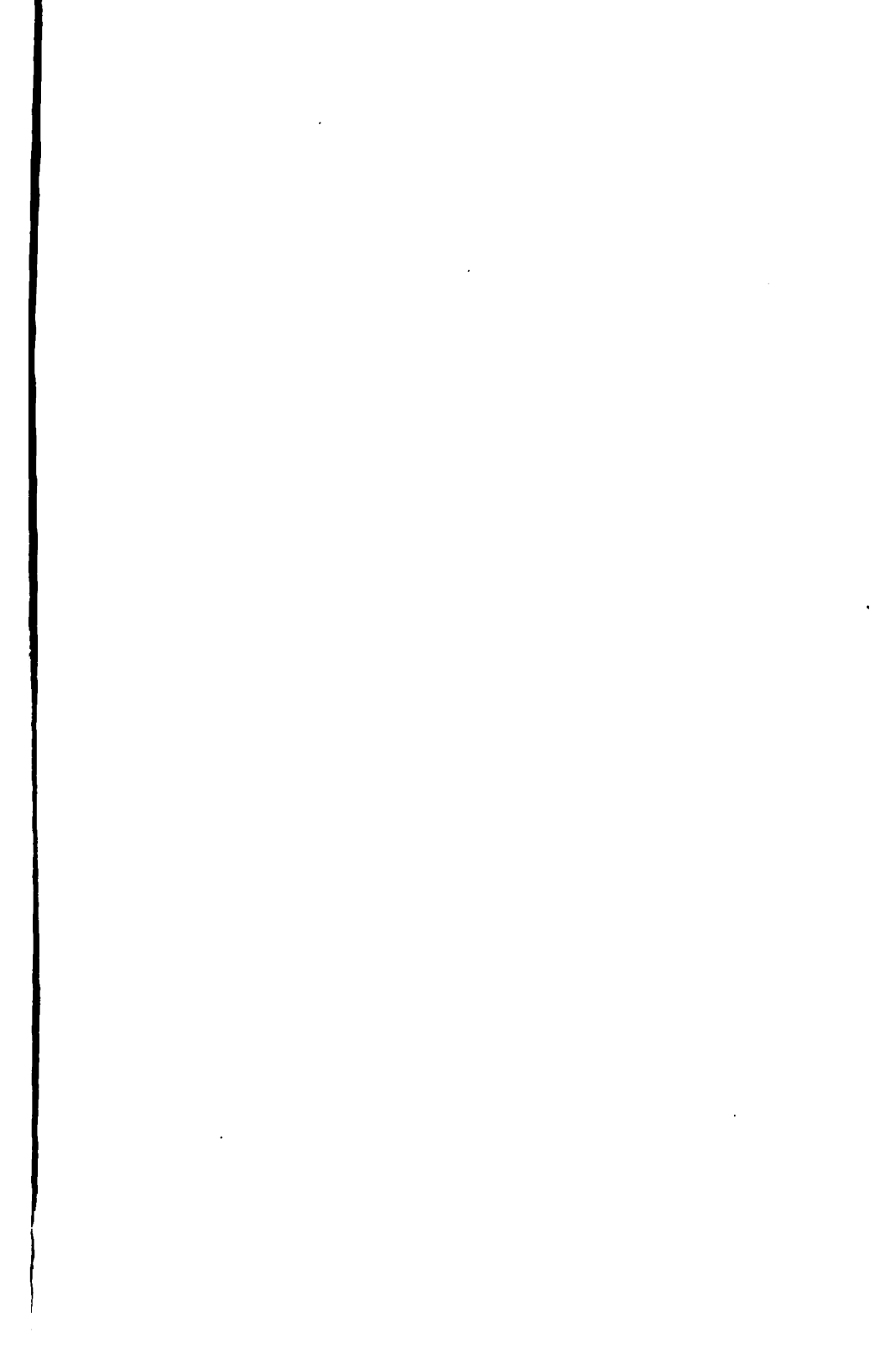
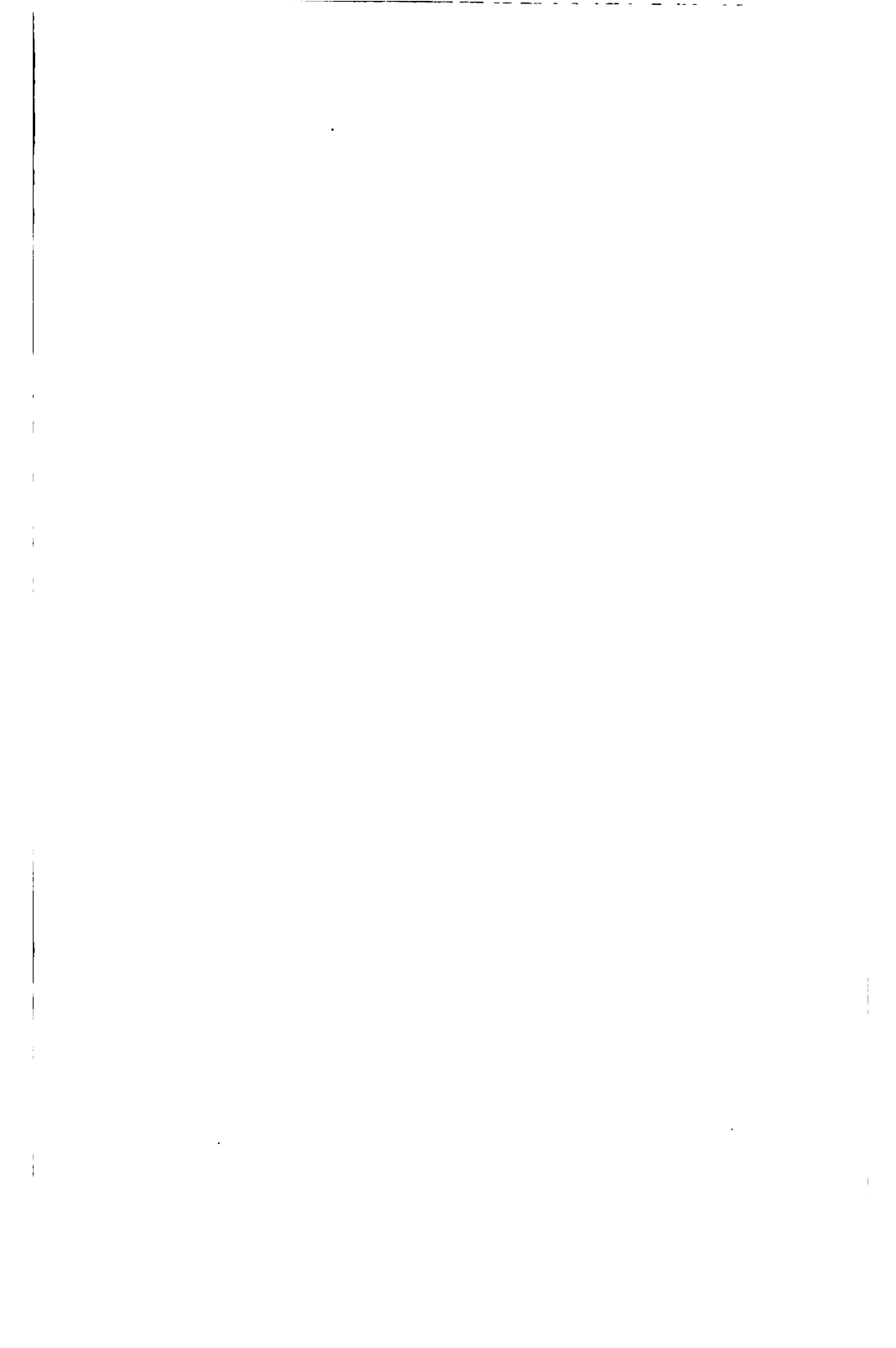
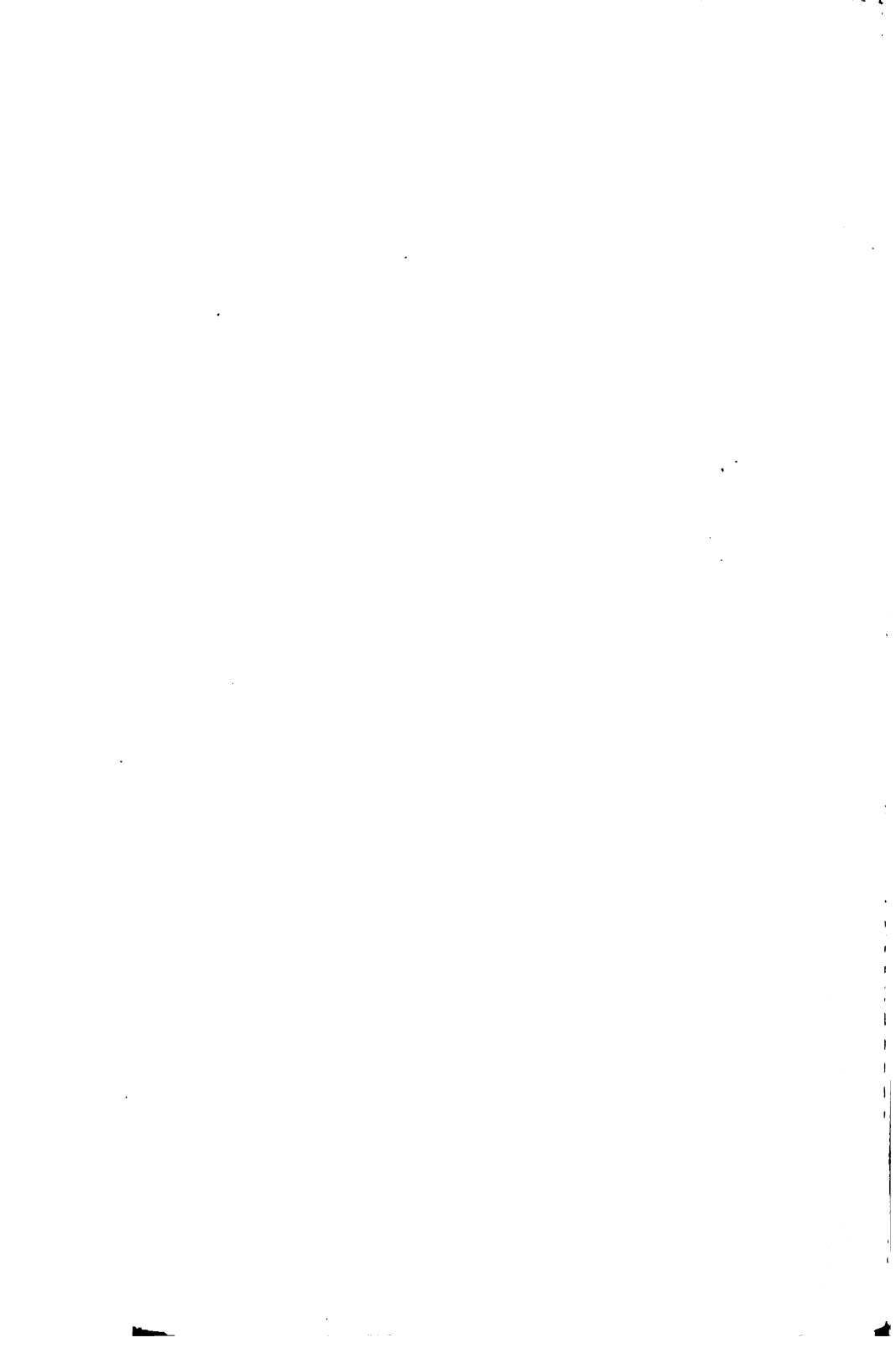




Photo. Turck, Vienna.

The Archduchess Elizabeth.





*Recollections of a Royal
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Recollections of a Royal Governess

CHAPTER I

EVERY conquering country under the sun, I presume, pursues the "money or your life" policy when it comes to the question of the native or the conqueror's language. Since Cromwell posted notices, carefully written in French, in all the Irish counties, that every Irish man, woman, or child must speak English in sixty days or hang, this same "snap judgment" sentence has had a violent vogue with all victors, as I found to my cost when I journeyed into the Austrian Empire.

Every railway employee is compelled to speak German, and as most of them are Bohemians, Hungarians, or Poles, and the German was spoken with a vile accent, it was indeed a kind of my money or my life question, as it was as much as I could do to obtain a cup of coffee and get half my change back. That first journey of mine from Vienna to Cracow was tedious and wearisome beyond any expectation, and I was thoroughly worn out with the bumping and pounding I had endured. As we were scheduled

for a quarter of an hour's wait at Cracow for the train going on to Lemberg, I walked about in order to stretch my cramped limbs and get a breath or two of fresh air. How hot it had been in that railway carriage I well remember, and I, acting on the illusion of most English people of twenty years ago that it would be cold in Poland, had travelled in a thick cloth costume. As I walked up and down, I noticed the piles of luggage awaiting the in-coming train, and, in order to assure myself that mine was all right, I made my promenade towards that end of the platform. My distress may be imagined when I say I was unable to find a single piece belonging to me.

The Lemberg train would soon be in. There was no time to be lost. I at once sought out the guard and made my appeal in German, the official tongue I took for granted he would understand. But not at all; my difficulties only increased. I spoke fair German, but he only shook his head. I tried French next, which he repudiated violently, with both hands. Then, as the minutes were flying, in desperation I began speaking English. Of course, that was the final straw. The man rushed away, to return quickly with all the officials he could gather out of the station. I believe now that they took me for a mad woman. All of these much be-whiskered, gold-laced individuals gathered closely around me, talking excitedly at the same time, in high-voiced, guttural tones, and I could not understand one word! It was an awful situation. Then, knowing the im-

portance of any Government official, I began desperately to shout Count Badeni's name over and over again, he being the Governor of Galicia, and it was to his daughter as companion-governess I was *en route*. I fancied they might fetch an interpreter, but, alas! there must have been some intricate Austrian-Polish twist in the pronunciation of that apparently simple name which I failed to achieve, because the train I had travelled in from Vienna moved slowly out of the station, and that in which I was to proceed upon my journey arrived, and Count Badeni seemed to mean little or nothing to these people. By this time slips of pink, blue, green and white paper were being showered upon me, but the why and the wherefore of them I could not fathom. However, as there appeared blank spaces, I hastily filled them all in with my name, Count Badeni's name, my destination, and anything else that popped into my distracted head.

Meanwhile the gold-laced officials mouthed terrible-sounding words, waved their hands wildly, and shrugged their shoulders resignedly. I was not doing what they asked, but I was mad, mad English, so they must put up with it! This was written on their faces. And then I was put into the train which had puffed into the station, and sent luggageless upon my way. It was humiliating to be moved about like this, whether one would or no, but such was my first experience in Poland. We had not proceeded far, and I was just meditating upon the blessing it was

that I had no more changes to make before I reached Lemberg, otherwise I might lose myself—I had nothing else left to lose—when a guard came through the carriage shouting something in stentorian tones. Fearing a change, possibly unscheduled, was imminent, I leaned forward and listened carefully, and what was my amazement to find that it was apparently a name, and from what I could make out of the absurd Hungarian-Bohemian-Polish-German, one rather like my own. Hoping it might have to do with my lost luggage, I beckoned to the guard and slowly and distinctly repeated my name. What he said bore so little resemblance to it that it was really only one of those inexplicable instincts which made me certain that I was the person being called for.

After my rather crushing experience in endeavouring to make the railway people understand my quite good French and German, it was truly refreshing to catch one of them blundering clumsily over my simple name and prefix. After repeating it several times in slow, distinct tones, I opened my case and produced a visiting card. The guard took it gingerly and looked at me, suspicion written on every line of his very foreign countenance. He compared it critically with a card which he took care to hold well out of my range of vision; finally, having rather grudgingly satisfied himself that at least my name was bona fide, he proceeded to show me the card which he held. Upon it was the name of my patron, the Countess Badeni, with my own written plainly underneath.

He then signed that I was to follow him, and he led the way through the train to a luxurious compartment, where I found the Countess and her daughter.

They were so kind and charming, their manners were so winning, that I fear my English stiffness must have appeared *gauche* and my attitude forbidding. I was really only shy. The Countess explained that Wanda, her daughter and my pupil, had met with a slight accident while playing tennis a few days before—a ball having struck her on the mouth and broken a tooth—which had necessitated a visit to a dentist in Vienna, and her maid, having told her of the foreign lady who had discovered the loss of her luggage at Cracow, she had concluded it might be her new English governess. All this in the most perfect French, after which we sat and glanced surreptitiously at one another with only a perfunctory remark now and again until we reached Lemberg.

CHAPTER II

October 2nd, Castle Büsk, Poland.

ALTHOUGH it is nearly two o'clock and I am deadly tired, I cannot sleep. My brain is a-whirl. I feel a wee bit like the little old dame in a tale of our nursery days, whose petticoats were cut short while she slept. "Can I be I?" I have washed, brushed my hair, and with a dressing-gown on I feel quite comfy physically, but never more wide awake. Possibly a settled task may calm my nerves, and so I will write you up, little book.

The Countess is charming, vivacious, extremely smart, and very sweet and kindly, I think. Wanda, the girl, is a dear; apparently demure, but—I see gleams of wickedness in her pretty eyes now and again, and fancy some acumen will be required to keep up with her pranks. She is only seventeen. The Count is delightful, and they have all treated me as an honoured guest; there is not a touch, trace, or hint of the "You are a paid companion, and do not forget it" attitude. It just shows that the higher one goes, the more considerate the treatment. In a family such as this is, to be good enough to be

with them and teach them, one is as good as they themselves are.

The carriages from Büsk met us at the Lemberg station ; and such lovely horses they have ! They would be difficult to beat. I noticed many queer-looking men leaning nonchalantly upon the barriers surrounding the station. When the Countess saw me staring at these oddities, she told me they were Jews. They watched us from under their sleepy eyelids like vultures waiting to swoop upon their prey, and, I think, notwithstanding their apparent indifference, no single movement on our part or that of the servants or aides-de-camp missed their observing eyes. With their greasy, corkscrewy curls and matted beards, the long, ugly gaberdines they affect, and their black clothes, they made a most unpleasant impression upon me. But the drive to the Castle was delightful, although the country is uninterestingly flat. That this flatness is neither stale nor unprofitable was shown by the vast fields of stubble which lay beside our road. We dashed along the hard, white, military highway at a tremendous speed, the hoofs of the horses pounding rhythmically.

By this time it was nearly six o'clock, and the sky was rosy with the glow from the setting sun. Where not touched with brilliant autumnal tints, the vegetation is intensely green ; a vivid, rich green such as I have never seen before. We have nothing like it in England. Now and again we passed a group

of low, brown, thatched buildings—these constitute a Polish village! It seems a desolate, sparsely inhabited country to English eyes, and when, about half way towards our destination, a neglected graveyard came in sight, the fences broken down and pigs rooting about, my heart sank near the zero mark. But joy! Not long after this the lights of the Castle burst upon us. The coachman whipped the horses into a flying gallop as we passed through the park gates, and we swung up to the brilliantly illuminated pile in a style I had never dreamed of participating in. The Count, with several house guests, was waiting upon the front steps, the servants lined up behind, the footmen in the blue-and-white livery of the Badenis. The Countess and her daughter have only been gone for two days, but from the demonstrations indulged in on this occasion one would have imagined that they had been away for at least six months. I, too, was accorded a cordial welcome.

Like the French, the Poles are extremely polite, but much noisier. I must say I like it, and I feel less lonely to-night than I have felt for many months in my own country and amongst my own people. Perhaps in the home country we take one another too much for granted. The cordiality here may be a little superficial, but, for all that, if it is intended to make a stranger in a strange land feel welcome, then it certainly achieved its end in my case, and that is much to be thankful for. The loss of my luggage

was duly exclaimed over. I was commiserated with, and the Count gave orders to send in his name, so I presume I shall get it sooner or later.

I endeavoured to make my luggageless state an excuse to avoid going down to dinner, as of course I had no suitable dress. The Castle is full of guests, and more were coming out from Lemberg, but no excuse would be listened to, and so, willy-nilly, I have made my *début* in my dark green cloth travelling costume. However, just before dinner, the Countess's own maid brought me some exquisite pink roses, which I fastened in my dress, and she did my hair most charmingly. I was so tired and dazed that I was really past caring how I looked ; still, with all of these foreign people, while most polite and kindly, one feels under a sort of battery of curiosity, and one cannot avoid feeling that one is regarded in much the same way as a newly-introduced animal in the Zoological Gardens would be at home. However, this feeling of being a show for curious eyes will soon pass, and I shall learn to accommodate myself to these novel surroundings.

The Castle is truly magnificent ; everything seems on so lavish a scale. My room is palatial in its proportions, but the furniture is rather shabby, and old yellow brocade curtains close around a huge bed. I have my windows, of which there are six, wide open, to let in the air, though even so I doubt if I can sleep with all the stuffy drapery around me. It is a beautiful, clear, starry night, but I can make out nothing

in the soft, warm blackness. It envelopes everything like a thick curtain of black tulle. It is nearly four o'clock. I must get to bed and try to sleep. I feel like a girl in a story book.

October 4th.

The Countess, Wanda and I breakfasted together. There is a balcony, arranged for the purpose, outside the drawing-room. A wide, white awning sheltered us from the sun, and I must say it was delightful; the fresh morning air, the lawns and flowers so beautifully kept, and the stillness was a balm!

But the breakfast! Such a Gargantuan feast! There was cold game, meat, eggs, *foie gras* and *caviare*. There were cakes of all sorts and there was tea.

During the course of this most un-English morning meal, the Countess remarked that the meat must make the breakfast seem "quite English!" Fancy an English family sitting down to such a breakfast!

Later in the morning we went a tour of inspection around the Home Farm, and through the glass-houses, of which there seemed no end. There was a pineapple house with pines in all stages, a peach-house glowing rosily with exquisite fruit, and there seemed to be miles of vineries full of delicious-looking grapes, black, white and pink. There are several long, narrow houses for violets alone, as the Countess expects an unbroken supply of the large Russian

variety. Two pretty little rivers run through the park. This afternoon we went for a long drive. It was most monotonous. One could see nothing but pine forests, miles and miles of dark-hued pines with no visible track. How the coachman avoided colliding with the trees I cannot tell. Sometimes we came out on a bit of road with a few houses, and the forests spreading away and away on each side, then we would be back again among the trees. Sometimes we saw a pretty undergrowth of green shrubs and berries, but for the most part nothing but pine needles and cones, and always the monotonous trees. The few peasants we have seen look dull and wear a hopeless sort of air. The only thing really alive about them is their curiosity.

After tea we played tennis. The courts are a dark green cement, marked out with white, so at a short distance one can scarcely tell them from the surrounding grass. A small pavilion has been built at one end, with seats, and it is surrounded by shrubs. The two little rivers flow near by, and altogether it is a most charming place. The game differs very little from our English tennis, but the movements of the players are delightful to watch, for the Poles are exceedingly graceful.

The poultry-houses, the dove-cotes, and all the Home Farm buildings, which are in plain view of the Castle windows, although about a quarter of a mile away, are built most daintily in imitation of pagodas, the whole forming a picturesque spot in the landscape.

Saturday, October 6th.

It is evident that my duties will be light, and my patrons kind and considerate. The Countess is very charitable. She has built, and largely maintains, a convent for nuns especially trained to work amongst these poor, wretchedly ignorant peasants. Of course, the resident nuns came from a Mother House, but the others are selected from the peasant class and kept in the convent for from four to six years, are trained in cleanliness, sick nursing, the care of children, and are taught their religion intelligently. It is true they still leave much to be desired, but after this course they are sent in twos and fours to any large landowner who desires to assist in the upraising of his peasants, and is willing to pay the convent a small sum for the cost incurred in the training. Many brave, kind souls are found amongst these women, I am told.

The Count Badeni pays a goodly salary for a doctor to attend his peasants, but as many of these latter live upon the outlying lands, and in winter it certainly requires much courage and fortitude to cross the snowy wastes and risk attacks from prowling wolves, the doctor draws his yearly stipend and gives as little attention to his patients as possible ; consequently the sick suffer horribly. One poor old creature, slowly dying from a malignant cancer, was pushed into a hut and left there alone, food was put in through the door, but no one would come near to see whether she took it or not. The good sisters in the neighbouring village heard of

this state of things and came over on a true errand of mercy. They washed her, and dressed the filthy wound, and there they remained until the wretched creature was relieved from her torture by kindly death. It was all done quite naturally and simply, without a shred of ostentation about the doing of it, but the Countess declared, with tears in her eyes, that a more heroic act it would be difficult to hear of, as the sisters had to combat, not only disease and dirt of the most offensive description, but the ignorant superstition of the woman's own relatives.

We drove into the village to-day and saw some of the nuns teaching the children to sew. Curiosity seems to be a prevailing trait of the Polish peasant. They all gathered about me as closely as they could to examine my hair, my eyes, my skin, my clothes, and one of them asked the Countess from what country I came. When she replied that I was English, the nun exclaimed : " Oh ! then it is the French who are *black !* "

The Countess is anxious to get some work started for the peasants, so that they may be employed during the long and dreary winter months, for when the snow closes round them, they do not leave their huts, but sleep and eat on or around the stove, which occupies the middle of their one apartment. This all-important stove is a marvellous structure of wood and clay, which throws out an enormous amount of heat ; and it would hardly be too much to say that round it the whole family life revolves during those

days and nights of snow imprisonment. They seem a dull, lethargic people ; the children may awake to the advantages which are being offered them, but I question it. There are so many generations of serfdom behind to combat.

The Countess tells me that she is anxious to introduce some more practical dress than their national costume, which consists of very full petticoats of dull colours, red or blue, and a short, sack-like linen jacket which, in winter, is exchanged for one of sheepskin. It seems to me a pity to alter this costume, for the picturesqueness, which is the only redeeming feature of these people, would then be destroyed ; it would vanish, leaving instead only the commonplace and the ugly. Women, girls and children wear exactly the same sort of clothes, the only mark of distinction being the head-dress. The old women wear a short black shawl covering their hair ; the married women adopt one of bright colours, and the young girls and children have their hair exposed, very shiny and smooth, and dressed with gay ribbons or silver ornaments. I suggested to the Countess a yoke dress with sleeves and skirt in one piece. She acquiesced in my idea at once, and was overjoyed when I volunteered to cut some out for the nuns.

Immediately upon our return, she ordered some stout material from a Lemberg merchant. I see a vision of myself cutting out little peasants' yoke dresses for the next few months ! Well, a worse fate might befall me !

When serfdom was abolished, some of the land was apportioned to the peasants, and they hold it in community. They had some fresh land, some pasture, and some land under the plough ; but as there are no posts or divisions, there are endless disputes in consequence. They pick up or chop down wood on the landowner's ground without the slightest compunction, though, as they nearly all work upon the estate, they are shrewd enough to do it as secretly as possible. No peasant is ever sent away, except to prison, as there is nowhere to send him, and he would have no chance of a livelihood were he to go. Thus the landowner is subjected to all the annoyances he underwent as a serf-holder, and gains none of the advantages enjoyed by the landed proprietor in other free countries.

Sunday, October 7th.

This morning at daybreak, I was wakened by the bell of the little church in the park ringing for early mass. We were to go at ten o'clock, so I was obliged to wait. I strolled about the gardens, and along by the river. It is extremely warm, and the discomfort of my ~~own~~ dress, which is of heavy cloth, is intense. I sincerely trust my missing luggage will arrive tomorrow. I fear my good friends may think I am only playing a game, and that I never really had any ! One is brought up to believe it is cold in Russia or Poland ; at present I am convinced this is a fallacy ! I have never felt such heat in England at this time of

colour of the natural flax. Their coats are long and shapeless, their baggy trousers are caught tightly about the ankles, and they wear high boots. Their heads, with masses of long, shaggy, matted hair and beards, present an extraordinarily wild, barbaric appearance. I am told that when these men enter the army they have their hair properly cut and their faces shaved, but that after their three years' compulsory service is over, they never shave again, though they allow their wives to clip their hair once or twice a year, and their beards at Easter.

In the shadows of the church the bright colours of the women's head-shawls and the silver-trimmed hair of the young girls presented a brilliant contrast to the shaggy unkemptness of the men, and from where I sat the closely-packed body of the church, during the genuflections, resembled one huge wave of variegated colour, rising and falling like the surging and receding of great waters.

Guests arrived from Lemberg for lunch, and the whole Castle was alive and noisy. The warmth of one's welcome in Poland seems to be measured by the degree of noise with which the visitor is greeted.

After lunch we all sat in the loggia. In the top of one of the trees at the side of the lawn, a dear little fluffy owl roosted, asleep, but quite visible on the skyline. Two of the gentlemen declared they would shoot it. Guns were brought, and they backed themselves for one shot each. They fired, but the owl slept calmly on ; the only result of the shots being

that the concussion broke one of the large panes of glass in the side of the loggia, and the report was so loud it startled everyone.

The visitors left about five-thirty, after an elaborate tea, and the noise at their departure was almost as great as at their arrival. The Count went with them. He will stay in Lemberg until Tuesday. The *curé* came to dine, and we had a quiet evening. He is a dear old man, but as he speaks only Polish (which is utterly incomprehensible to me) and but a word or two of German, my share of the entertainment consisted of smiling and looking amiable.

CHAPTER III

Tuesday, October 18th.

I HAVE been in Russia—actually in Russia! It was an excursion I shall remember as long as I live. And most wonderful of all, we entered without passports. I am told it is said in Russia: “Men are composed of soul, body, and passport; the first two are of no use without the third.” I believe that very few people, so few one could almost count them on the fingers of one’s hands, have entered Russia without a passport.

The Countess had arranged this excursion for several of her friends, and I went with her. We were a party of eight, and rode in four victorias, each drawn by a pair of exceedingly fleet horses. We set off directly after lunch. The sky was clear and blue, that pale, milky, far-away blue, only to be seen in the interior. The frontier is an hour’s drive from the Castle, the fine military high-road being that upon which we drove from Lemberg on the evening of my arrival—how long ago that seems!

When we reached the frontier, we saw a fair-sized barracks with guard-room facing the road; across that

road were heavy wrought-iron gates, painted yellow and black, and at each end were tall posts, crowned with the double-headed eagle of Austria, scowling across the hundred yards of neutral ground at the double-headed eagle of Russia, which guarded the barrier of that vast country. Very seldom, indeed, is the frontier crossed at this point.

Of course, Count Badeni's liveries were well known, and, after a lengthy conversation between the Countess and the Austrian officer in command, he crossed the little plot of neutral ground and approached the Russian Guard. The Austrian was gone some time—it seemed hours to our impatient and expectant party—but presently he reappeared accompanied by the Russian officer in command, who approached and talked with the Countess with that suavity of manner and courtesy for which the Cossack officer is famous. Lack of passports, that, of course, was the difficulty. It was plain that he did not like to refuse, neither did he wish to allow our party to waive the usual formalities. However, after much conversation, of which I could not understand a word, but the gist of which I have learned since, on condition that we should be under the surveillance of twelve mounted Cossacks, he gave the eagerly desired permission. The heavy Austrian barrier swung open; our carriages rolled through; we crossed the hundred yards of neutral ground; the second pair of gates opened before us; and we entered Russia.

That entrance gave me a strange sort of thrill. Our carriages were ordered to keep together, and, surrounded by the twelve huge Cossacks, we set off at a lively pace. The Cossacks wear a uniform of dust brown, and the handle of the knout shows above their high boots. They ride the beautiful little dark brown horses of the Steppes, so fine, so strong, so wiry. Whether to impress us, or because they were in high spirits at this change from the monotony of their frontier service, they treated us to a display of horsemanship more marvellous than I have ever dreamed of. They dashed about like wild creatures (as indeed they are), so close, yet never touching either one another or the carriages; now in front, now winding in and out between our vehicles, now in lines on each side, then, from behind, after slipping from the saddle and hanging by the girth, dashing past like the wind. Their marvellous speed and control of their mounts is beyond my power of description.

The Austrian-Poles have an especial horror of, and antipathy to, the Cossacks; the reason being, that the rebellions of their compatriots in Russia have been so often brutally and cruelly crushed by these same regiments. My companions, therefore, sat with immovable countenances, staring straight before them, pretending not to see what was passing. I, however, having neither personal nor sentimental prejudices against the Russians, watched with great interest all the wonderful equestrian gyrations.

has been
seen
p. 18

We passed through some miles of a sandy country with few trees, save now and again a sentinel-like poplar, standing lonely and bare, and no signs of human habitation until we came to Radziwilow.

A few years ago this had been a large market-town, but riots had occurred, and the risings had been crushed with great severity by the military. There had been a massacre of the people in a large Franciscan church, standing in the middle of the town, into which the people had fled for sanctuary, as well as to the monastery in the near neighbourhood. Alas! both sanctuaries were violated, many of the monks and priests killed, and unspeakable atrocities perpetrated. It was a melancholy sight to see the once handsome buildings in complete ruins; great slabs of stone, and even fragments of sacred statuary were scattered about in confusion. The roof was gone, but part of the walls still stand, enough to indicate the shape of the church. The Russian Government allows the Greek Church to persecute the Roman unmercifully, and laws are framed to encourage Russian subjects to join the so-called Orthodox Church.

Before we visited these ruins, we bought up almost the entire supply of tobacco in the shops, and this we smuggled home. The real reason I cannot exactly fathom, but I fancy it was a wager of some sort. It seemed a great risk to run for so little gain, and the Count would be furiously angry were he ever to know of it. I felt extremely nervous at having

a large packet to use as a footstool on the return journey, but the Countess and Wanda were in high spirits over their successful deception, as also were the other five of our party.

The Cossacks kept close beside us all the time, and how they avoided seeing the purchases I am sure I cannot understand. The inhabitants of Radziwilow crowded about our carriages to such an extent that with our Cossacks riding hither and thither round us constantly, I was in a most unenviable state of nerves, lest some one should get injured, and I was glad, indeed, when our horses' heads were turned towards home and Austria.

There is but scant twilight in this country, and darkness settled down upon us ere we reached the frontier, but there the barracks were brilliantly lighted, and the barriers were opened with little delay. The Countess presented a goodly sum of money to be distributed amongst our Cossack escort, and we left amid cries of thanks, which echoed strangely across the neutral ground. As we passed the Austrian barrier, and the huge gates clanged behind us, I for one breathed more freely. It was an exciting and nerve-racking experience, but I would not have missed it on any account.

I must say I find my employers more and more charming, kindly, warm-hearted, generous and refined. What more could any dependent ask? The Count is delightful. After dinner to-night, we had a long talk upon a variety of subjects. He seems

much interested in our English politics. A pretty compliment he paid my French. "Had I not the assurance of Mademoiselle that she had been born and raised in England, certainly I should declare her native place to be—Paris!"

Count Zaliski, the Minister of Agriculture, who is staying at the Castle, told me to-day that Count Badeni is looked upon as the most accomplished diplomat in Austria; and it is whispered in credible quarters that the day is not far distant when a post of much greater distinction and far weightier political responsibility will be offered him.

Count Zaliski explained to me the extremely difficult and arduous position which Count Badeni, as Governor of Austria-Poland, is called upon to occupy. Frontier difficulties are constantly arising with Russia; and, in reality, the friendship between these two countries is very half-hearted and hollow. As Poland is a conquered country, the Russians have no scruples in making raids, and questions arising therefrom with others are continually causing friction between the Cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburg. The Poles have really suffered much injustice in this way, so that when a man like Count Badeni, of their own nationality, who truly and sincerely is devoted to Austria and his Emperor, came to the front and could be placed at the head of affairs in this disturbed region, he was a person to be highly considered by the other members of the Cabinet.

Another bit of news: Wanda is to make her *début*

in Lemberg society this winter, which means far more arduous social duties than I had anticipated.

October 22nd.

Luckily at long last my luggage turned up this morning. I am glad, for had I remained luggageless much longer I might have been reduced to feloniously abstracting one of the yoke dresses I have been cutting out for the nuns to make the village children. Oh, those yoke dresses! I have cut and cut, and still the good nuns, like *Oliver Twist*, are crying for more! The Countess got bales of the stuff!

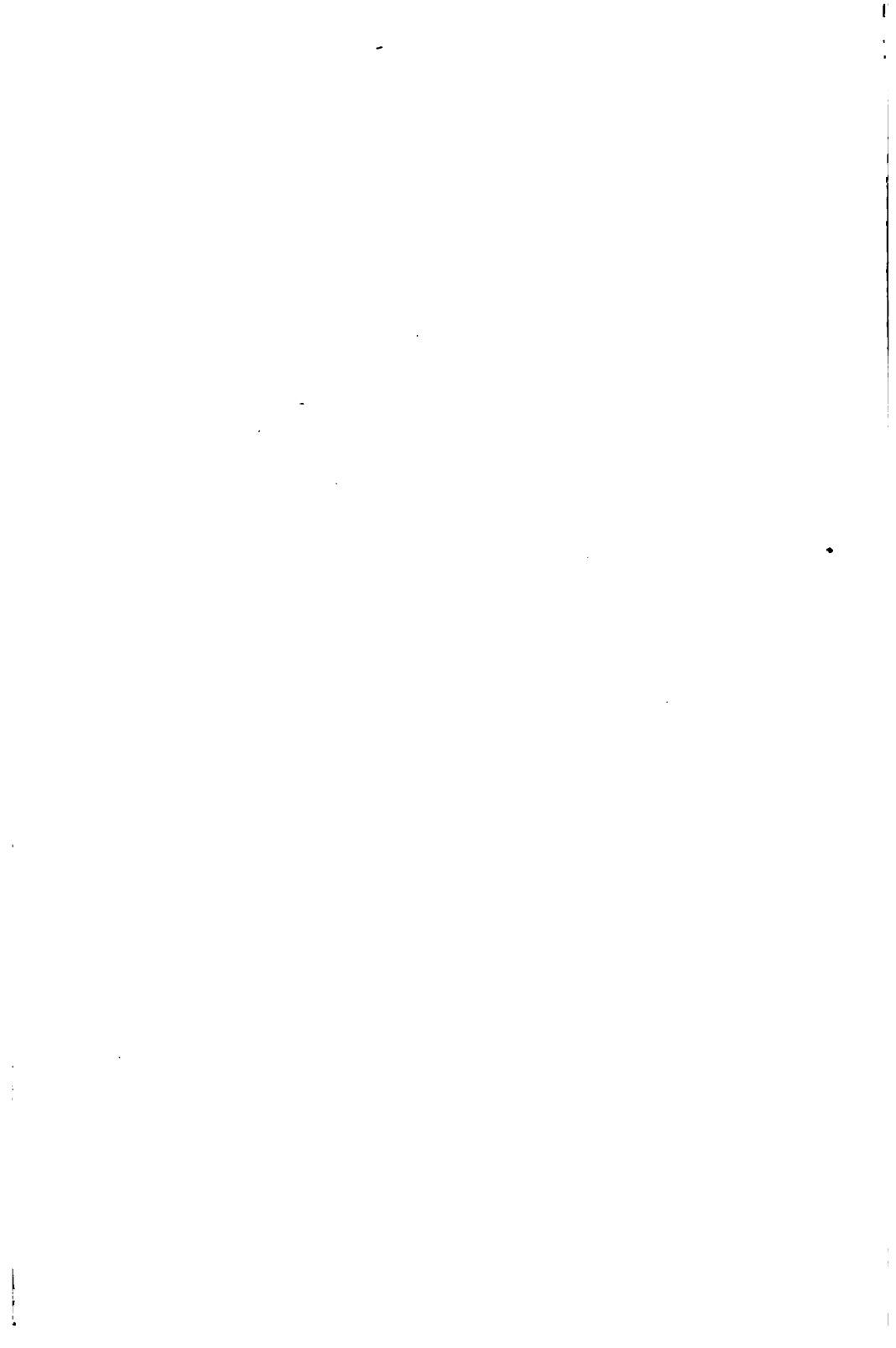
Re-reading this entry in my diary reminds me of an amusing episode. The material the Countess bought was a most hideous mixture of red and black, and the neighbourhood grew famous for these wretched dresses. They were cut in three sizes, like the bears of nursery lore, little, big, and middle size, and all the little peasant girls were obliged to fit into one of the three sizes. One day, when the Countess and I were walking in the village, we met a mother wearing, as a jacket, one of the large size of these famous frocks, she having taken it off her child who had been dressed in the convent. A regular Polish hurricane of a scene ensued between the irate benefactress and that mother!

October 24th.

Last night I was suddenly wakened by stags fighting in the park. They come to drink from the river.



LEMBERG.



Their roaring was frightful, and the noise of the blows of one hard head against the other was appalling—the impact must have been terrific. Springing out of bed, I flew to the window, thinking as it was a clear frosty night, flooded with moonlight, I should view a strange and wondrous spectacle, but the trees were so thick that it was only a few shadowy and phantom-like glimpses I could catch.

Our pleasant autumn, with its brilliant colours and sunny skies, is, alas, drawing to a close. To-day has been bleak and cheerless, and sad. There was heavy rain driven by high winds, and the stoves were lighted to-day. Winter is approaching—one shivers at the thought.

October 30th.

All Souls. Early this morning we drove to Lemberg and, after we had been to mass in the Cathedral, we went to the cemetery which is situated upon a high hill at the back of the city. It was crowded, as every one places candles upon the graves of their relatives. The Badenis, being a very old family, had many tombs to decorate. As we drove home, we could see the lights from the hundreds of candles shining out through the darkness, like a shower of stars. For miles we could see them sending their messages forth into the night. It is a beautiful custom.

November 1st.

This morning when I awoke there seemed the

most wondrous hush over the world. I lay quite still trying to make it out. Finally I got up and drew back my curtains. Then I saw the reason. Snow, snow, snow everywhere, covering all the park, and the buildings of the Home Farm were completely obscured. The thick white flakes are like a heavy falling veil before one's face. It will snow like this for several days, they tell me, and in the meantime we are buried in the house. But when one has plenty of books and one's companions are such charming people as the Badenis, one need not grumble.

November 4th.

The road was cleared this morning as the snow has ceased falling. It has been interesting to see the men digging out the sheep, pigs, etc., on the Home Farm, and we did enjoy getting out into the air once more. The sun was shining brightly, and all the shadows seemed a deep, bright, indigo blue! This has been one of many surprises to me. We all wore snow-boots, as the snow is quite hard already, and we do not sink into it as we should do at home.

November 10th.

We heard this morning that wolves were about. It sounds thrilling! A man came to the Castle and said a pack of thirteen had been seen in the park, so we are not to go out on foot any more.

November 14th.

A child has been caught and eaten by those hideous wolves ! Poor little creature, he had been sent on an errand to a cottage just outside the village, and staying—perhaps detained, who knows ?—a few minutes, the darkness overtook him, and with it, silently, the ravenous shadow ; one scream, and never more is he heard of. It is hard to believe that such things can happen so close to one. I wanted so much to see these cruel beasts, that we spent the entire evening in a guest chamber which overlooks the largest tract of country. There we sat in the dark room until, I think, all our nerves were on edge, to get a glimpse only of dark shadows flitting so quickly and silently over the snow that it was impossible to distinguish them. I feel quite creepy, and know I shall dream unpleasant dreams. We go next week to Vienna, and then return to Lemberg for the winter.

Vienna, November 21st.

Events have crowded one upon the heels of the other so hard and fast that I feel confused. Three days we have been here shopping, shopping, shopping. It is so new and strange, and the casual manner of the Countess as she orders thousands of marks' worth of dresses, contrasted with my own panic when I find my dressmaker has worked in an extra twenty-five shillings on my bill, is striking : how it emphasises our relative positions in the world of material things !

To-day I went, with the Count and Countess and Wanda, to stand in the corridor at the Hofburg to see the wedding procession of the Archduchess Louise of Tuscany and Prince Frederick Augustus of Saxony. The Archduchess is well known here, as she and her sister have spent much time in the Hofburg. Wild Habsburgs they were (and are still), if all the gossip may be relied upon. Of course, being exiles and living upon the bounty of the Emperor may in a measure account for the extreme liberty they have been allowed. At to-day's ceremony I stood next to a Viennese lady who regaled me with some interesting tittle-tattle. She said the young Archduchesses were brought up by governesses who permitted them to do exactly as they pleased. Louise used to drop *billets-doux* out of the Hofburg windows to the soldiers on duty in the courtyard—literally under the Emperor's nose! The Archduchess Alice, being a *dévôte* and *bigote*, was constantly at church or in retreat, and, having so much to do to attend to her soul, had no time to look after her children. The Archduke, being a self-centred and self-indulgent old "rip," of course paid them no heed. No happiness is predicted as the outcome of to-day's wedding. It is said that Louise was in love with and desirous of marrying Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, but for political reasons the Emperor refused to sanction the match, in fact, there had been no end of a row, and she was sequestered in the Convent of the Sacred Heart



HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR FRANZ JOSEF.

until she consented to marry Frederick Augustus. At any rate the sympathy all seems to be with Louise. She is not by any means pretty, though she has a bright face, and looked extremely well in her magnificent wedding dress.

It is the first time I have ever seen the Emperor on foot. He has a kind old face, and a splendid figure worthy a man half his years. He escorted the Queen of Saxony. The King of Saxony was with the Archduchess Alice of Tuscany, Louise's mother. It was a brilliant sight ; the grand corridor of the Hofburg, all a-glitter with crystal chandeliers, the men in gorgeous uniforms and diamond-studded orders, the splendid gowns of the ladies, each with pages to carry her train. It was a scene which I shall always remember, but the thing that impressed me most deeply was that amid all this splendour, all this magnificence, no one, from Emperor and bride down to the ladies-in-waiting of the Royal suite, looked happy.

It was during this visit to Vienna that I first met Madame Merry del Val, of whom and her family I shall have much to say later.

CHAPTER IV

EXPOSED to the cold north and north-eastern winds, shut in by the Carpathian Mountains from any warm winds which might chance to temper it from the south, Galicia has the severest climate in Austria, and I firmly believe that Lemberg is the very particularly coldest spot in the whole of Galicia. This city is built round a large square with gardens in the centre, and in this quarter one sees wondrous fine shops, heaped with gorgeous goods from the Orient (for centuries Lemberg has been Poland's chief trading centre with the East), rubbing elbows with the dirty, grubby little hovels which pass for shops. Dominating the city from a hill, the Ruthenian Cathedral of St. George rears its tall, mosque-like turrets, overlaid with gold, which glint against the pale sky in the sunlight, with a richness in direct contrast to the cold whiteness of the surrounding snow-clad town, and lend a touch of Oriental and dream-like beauty to the scene.

The Ruthenians are a race distinct from the Poles. They are a conquered people, having far more affinity with the Russians than with the Poles or Austrians ;



GOVERNMENT PALACE, LEMBERG.

in fact, there is but small sympathy between them, and the Ruthenian is constantly plotting and intriguing for Russia in Galicia. Since Galicia has become the property of Austria, the Ruthenians, hitherto of the Greek Church, made their submission to Rome, on condition that they should be allowed to keep their services and customs exactly as before. This was possible, as they were schismatics, not heretics. These services are called the Ruthenian Rite, and their priests marry (with restrictions), but there is really little in common with Rome.

Upon that side of Lemberg opposite the Cathedral is what is known as the Gravel Hill, or Montagne du Sable. It is a huge artificial mound, erected hundreds of years ago by the Poles as a monument to some victory gained over the Ruthenians. A drive has been cut to the top, and it affords a place for merrymaking at Carnival season, and also during the June races. These are the two great events of the Lemberg year, This kind of memorial is also to be seen at Cracow, where the mound was built in honour of the hero, Kosciusko.

The Government buildings, big, white and imposing, are one with the Palace, and occupy a considerable area. They are in two large wings; the left is occupied by the Bureaux, the right the Governor's Palace, the central space being filled with gardens. This latter building is flanked on the left by the military barracks, some gardens intervening, and on the right is the handsome Palace of the Archbishop of Lemberg.

Beyond this lies the Gravel Hill. Also quite close was the Palace of the Commander-in-chief of the Austrian forces in Galicia ; during my time Prince Louis Windischgrätz, the brilliant son of a brave and gallant soldier, occupied this most important post. The Windischgrätz have governed a tiny principality in Styria, therefore, although not quite ranking with the reigning families, intermarriages, which frequently occur, are not morganatic.

The Emperor Franz Josef is heavily indebted to this family, for, in the beginning of his reign, Austria owed the subjugation of both Hungary and Bohemia to the generalship of Prince Alfred Windischgrätz, the father of Prince Louis, our Commander in Lemberg, and it was at that period that a corner of the mantle of Tragedy, with which the country was then enveloped, fell heavily upon this family.

Although to all intents and purposes Bohemia had bowed her head in subjection, the city of Prague was still in a state of great unrest, and street fighting was the order, or rather the disorder, of the day when Czech and German met. The Prince called out the troops to stop the brawling. To express their stern disapproval of these methods, a section of a Slav organization proceeded to Headquarters. Despite the horrified protests and efforts of the sentries to suppress them, the roughs created a great disturbance, and the sounds of catcalls, hootings and some firing of small arms penetrated the Palace. The Princess Windischgrätz, a beautiful woman who had bravely

left her children that she might stay beside her husband and cheer him in his duty, hearing the disturbances, and disregarding her husband's warnings not to show herself, ran to a window overlooking the street in order to see what was happening. The rioters, catching sight of her, one of them, with unerring aim, fired, killing her instantly. It is presumed, as she was wearing a blue dress, it was mistaken for her husband's uniform, as it is scarcely credible that even a Bohemian rebel would deliberately shoot down a beautiful, defenceless woman. This was the mother of Prince Louis Windischgrätz.*

The Windischgrätz were very kind to me while I stayed in Lemberg. The Commander of the Austrian army in Galicia is of course a most important personage, and it was only consistent that the Palace be ordered with all the etiquette to which he was entitled, thus maintaining his position as son of the haughty father who held that "Mankind begins with the Baron." Levées were held each week for the officers, and an enormous staff of soldier servants kept. This led to an amusing encounter between Count Badeni and the Prince.

The Count had taken much interest in a boy employed in the kitchens at the Government Palace. This lad was really a culinary genius, and the Count went so far as to apprentice him for six months in the Rothschilds' kitchens in Paris. The boy had

* The treacherous murder of the Crown Prince Ferdinand and the Duchess of Hohenberg has occurred since this was written.

cultivated his talent faithfully ; his remarkable dishes were invariably recognized, and the Count was frequently congratulated upon the lucky possession of such a marvel. Especially did the Prince Windischgrätz compliment him. At the age of twenty, of course, the boy was called upon to serve his three years in the army. Count Badeni, without the slightest doubt that his request would be granted, as it was very easy to secure men to replace a conscript, went to Prince Windischgrätz to ask for the lad's release. To his complete astonishment the Prince replied firmly, "No, he must serve."

"But," cried the Count in amazement, "it would be unthinkable waste to make that boy serve as a soldier for three years !"

"Ah, yes," answered the Prince coolly, "but he shall serve in my kitchen !"

And true enough he did !

In my journal I find the following account of an encounter I had with Prince Louis Windischgrätz the first Christmas I spent in Poland, and before I knew the family so well as I did later.

December 24th.

All the preparations for to-morrow have fallen upon me, and in an hour we go to the midnight mass. All the presents are arranged on little tables around the big Christmas tree in the *salon*. It is so difficult to give pleasure to people who are so rich and have everything. As I was deputed to receive and arrange

all the presents, I conceived the idea of disguising each in many wrappers. While I was thus busily engaged and surrounded by a veritable sea of tissue paper and yards of ribbon, a large parcel arrived from the Windischgrätz Palace. It contained the most lovely presents, but not one was marked for whom it was intended. Of course, I had no idea of which was for whom. I *was* in a state of mind. I did not want to consult the Countess and thus spoil her surprise. I did not know what to do.

It was already dark, but on the spur of the moment I decided to go myself and ask the Princess Windischgrätz. I had been there with the Countess and Wanda, and they had dined here once or twice. I hastily threw on my cloak and hood, and bravely went out; but when I stood at the entrance of the Palace, I decided that it was distinctly one thing to glide up in the Badeni sleigh and enter with the Countess and Wanda, and quite another to stand alone under the *porte-cochère* at an unconventional hour, and ask a scandalized *valet de chambre* if I could see a Princess! I felt a very small atom of humanity, notwithstanding my five feet ten, when I was told that Her Highness was out! Just at this moment, I saw descending the stairs from the Prince's apartments a colonel whom I knew fairly well.

I hailed him with joy—to the further scandalizing of the *valet de chambre*—and relating my difficulty, asked him if I could not see the Prince. Discipline is very severe, and he hesitated. I urged and pleaded, and

after a few moments of hesitation, he remounted the stairs to the Prince's apartments.

I waited in one of the small reception rooms, and as I waited a sudden remembrance assailed me of all the jewels and valuables which I had left quite unguarded in the *salon* at home. My blood turned cold as I realized that I had carelessly left these at the mercy of the servants. For a moment I really thought I should faint. What was I to do? It was bad enough to have disregarded conventions in this most strictly conventional place, and I certainly could not run away now!

It seemed ages, though in reality but a few minutes, while I stood in the centre of that room, watching the clock, my heart pounding against my ribs, before I heard a clatter of spurs upon the marble staircase, and then saw the Prince enter the room. With many apologies, I hastily explained my dilemma, and showed him the parcel of gifts which I had carried over. He was charming, would not listen to my apologies, and at once wrote out a list of the presents with the names of the recipients. Then he announced his intention of accompanying me back to the Government Palace. I could not accept such an overwhelming honour, so he sent his aide-de-camp, who, poor man, had to carry the parcel of presents. I didn't want anyone. I wanted to *run*! My thoughts were with the presents I had left open and unguarded in the *salon*. I set that wretched aide-de-camp a pace! Luckily I found everything intact.

I recall another time when I was not so fortunate

in meeting with the approval of the Prince, although my intentions were every whit as good. The Countess and Wanda were away for a few days, and finding time hang heavily upon my hands, I went to see if I could be of any small service to the Princess Windischgrätz or her daughter.

I found the Princess confined to her room with a racking toothache, her face swelling rapidly. I had suffered much from the same agonizing pain, and had discovered a dentist who was a capable exponent of the "painless extraction" system—almost unknown at that period—and he had extracted several teeth for me quite painlessly.

The old-fashioned dentist employed by the Princess, and nearly all the nobility in Lemberg, of course did not understand the new methods. I, therefore, urged her to send for my young dentist and get the trouble over. She did send. He came, and to his credit be it said, he was not five minutes in the room before the troublesome tooth was out. The pain at once lessened, the Princess slept, and I returned home to my lunch in an exceedingly self-satisfied frame of mind. But, alas! the Prince, upon learning that a Princess Windischgrätz' tooth had been whisked out with so little ceremony by a strange dentist, was extremely annoyed.

Needless to say, I kept carefully out of his way for some time, and when I learned that he and the Princess were dining at Government Palace retired to my room with a headache.

However, the next day Count Badeni laughed at me and said, "The headache was unnecessary, the Prince has forgotten the tooth," and as I never heard anything further about it, I presume I was forgiven.

January 4th, 1892.

Bruises cover me from head to foot; my body resembles a draught-board with alternate patches of black and white. I am stiff and sore in every joint, and the reason is—I am learning, or trying to learn, to skate. Why I am so extremely awkward I can't think. I seem to get more falls than I get in strokes. The poor little instructor is not of much use in holding me up, as he is only about five feet high. When I go down it means a tumble for him as well. The Poles are such exquisitely graceful skaters. They swing over the glassy surface like swallows, turning, curveting and gliding, as much at ease as they would be if dancing in a ballroom. I have a few companions in misery, some of whom are rather illustrious personages, the most interesting being the Archduchess Bianca, daughter of Don Carlos, the Pretender of Spain, by his Italian wife, and there is also the wife of the Archduke Salvator. She is a dark, slender, pretty girl, graceful, with an exquisite figure, very merry, and keen on whatever amusement is offered at the moment.

Our lessons come at the same time, and frequently when she tires and wishes to rest, the skating-master comes to me. To-day I was more unfortunate than



„DON CARLOS, THE SPANISH PRETENDER.

usual, and the poor little man had many a hard knock. I am sure he was pleased to return to the Archduchess. But she tired easily to-day, and soon went to her box to rest. Once again I was taken in hand by the little master. As we passed her *loge*, the Archduchess called out in French, her dark eyes dancing with mischief, "When you've knocked him down twice, you may send him back to me!" Luckily the wee man understood no language but his own native Polish.

January 10th.

We have just heard that the Count has forbidden the production of a political play which has been in rehearsal for some time. Last night he witnessed the final rehearsal, and upon the fall of the curtain banned it. There is considerable excitement, and to-day, as we drove to pay some visits, we—or the Count's liveries on the box—were loudly hooted. The Countess says this means trouble for us all. The Count says that the play is distinctly antagonistic to Russia and he dare not allow it to proceed. But why did he permit it to go so far in preparation? So much was said about it that he must have known the nature of it—so why not have gone to an earlier rehearsal and stopped it before? I do feel sorry for the management, who must be very considerably out of pocket.

The Countess' prediction of trouble was only too thoroughly fulfilled. We were assailed in the streets ;

we dared not go to a theatre, scarcely to church ; wherever the Count Badeni's liveries appeared it was a signal for trouble. The feeling against Russia in this province runs so high that the idea of the Governor of Galicia, who was born a Pole, showing the slightest predilection for the Russian Government was, in the eyes of the Poles, one with treachery. They entirely forgot that technically he was no longer a Pole, but the representative of the Imperial Government of Austria. The Russian Consul-General was baited and annoyed ; he was boycotted like an Irish landlord, and was obliged to ask for his recall. Never shall I forget, a few weeks later, assisting the Countess and Wanda upon their At Home day, when the succeeding Consul called. The long series of reception rooms, beautifully decorated with that profusion of flowers always affected by Polish people, were crowded with the members of the best society in Lemberg.

The big footmen threaded their way amongst the gay, chattering crowd, bearing huge silver salvers laden with tea and sandwiches, cakes and confections, and then the *major domo* announced in a loud voice, "The Russian Consul-General and his lady." As we were greeting them, quite suddenly a silence fell upon the chattering people, and the crowd disappeared, literally melting away. The big footmen stood gaping at one another over their trays of dainties, and we were left, a party of six, as completely alone, except for servants, as though we were marooned

upon a desert island. The situation was awful, but both the Badenis and the Russian Consul were accomplished diplomats, and neither showed the slightest concern nor chagrin. It was, of course, the intense sympathy with their sister country, Russian Poland, that had caused the exodus. The Polish people would not voluntarily stop under the same roof one second with a representative of hateful, official Russia.

CHAPTER V

COMING after a severe penitential season such as is Lent, Easter is always a chastened Festival. Christmas is largely given up to children and charity, but Carnival lets itself go in all sorts of startlingly riotous and extravagant excitements. The domino and masque cover a legion of escapades, innocent in themselves, but all delightfully *risqué* because of the disguise.

Carnival lasted about three weeks the first winter I was in Lemberg, and balls, dinners, parties of all sorts, were crammed into this brief period in a fashion which makes my head whirl when I recall it. I was never in my bed before three o'clock in the morning. At the Government Palace we gave two state dinners and three balls, as well as several small dancing parties. Besides the important resident families of Lemberg, many people from the country who had no town house came to stay in the hotels, and joined together to entertain in return for the hospitality lavished upon them by their Lemberg friends. The Countess would say: "Light the lights, get three cats and a dog, and the whole of Lemberg will come in."

Although the white walls of hardened snow, which were thrown up on each side of the cleared streets, rendered any procession during Carnival, such as those commonly indulged in by Southern cities, out of the question, the masqueraders capered through the narrow paths and flung flowers and confetti with the same spirit displayed by their neighbours of warmer climes.

Lemberg being the main commercial centre as well as the Government Headquarters of Galicia, there are two distinct participants in the revels, the *haut monde* and the tradespeople. Occasionally the two factions come into contact, and then there is some friendly fooling, but it has always to be remembered that the strong political feeling is a bond between all Poles, no matter to what class of society they belong.

The profusion of flowers in Poland at Carnival time I have never seen exceeded, and only equalled in St. Petersburg. In this bitter country, where each flower is of so much value, the prodigality is prodigious. Crates of exquisite blossoms from Vienna and the Riviera arrived at our Palace daily. A great quantity was sent in from the glass-houses at Büsk, and the Countess and Wanda received dozens of bouquets every day from friends and admirers in the cotillons, as they were great favourites in society. Each night they returned from their parties, the carriage heaped with choice blooms, which were left in the ante-room until morning, when I took off the ribbons, and all the flowers that would

revive I put into warm water in shallow zinc basins, of which I found dozens stored in the Palace. When they had lifted their heads, I made them into bouquets and sent these to all the old ladies I knew, Wanda's grandmother amongst them, who were prevented by age or illness from taking their places as of old in the gaieties which reigned.

Extract from my diary :

February.

This afternoon the Countess, Wanda and I planned to have a quiet time. Wanda begins to look a little fagged from her weeks of late hours and much dancing. To-night a large masked ball is to take place at the Potockis', and the Countess arranged that we three should have tea quite quietly in her own sitting-room. I grasped the Countess' suggestion with alacrity, as I am quite worn out. My duties include so much going about with Wanda that sleep has rarely touched my eyes before three or four o'clock in the morning. Usually, too, I am left to give tea and receive any chance visitors in the afternoon which, when one is tired to death and faces another ball in the evening, is distinctly trying. So five o'clock found us cosily ensconced in the pretty room at the far end of the series of reception rooms, used exclusively by the Countess. The curtains were drawn, and we were gossiping with all the ardour of three women who have a sense of humour and unbounded trust in one another's discretion, when

suddenly we were rudely interrupted by the sound of loud laughter and many voices. The door burst open and a band of merry-makers poured into our retreat; masks and dominos disguised their personalities, but there was no disguising their wild spirits. Never shall I forget the horrified countenances of our servants peering from the background, utterly helpless to stem the tide of fun. We have heard that the party gathered quietly at the Palace entrance, and when the *valet de chambre* opened the door, by suddenly flinging confetti in his face had gained access. Once inside, indeed, it was King Carnival who reigned to-day!

The Poles are noisy, even the most well-bred, and such madcaps as were these youngsters—of course they were friends of Wanda's. They made short work of our tea and then danced and pirouetted through the rooms, flinging confetti right and left; but worse was to come. In the ante-room they came upon my baths of flowers which I had been too busy to make up, and with shouts of joy they dragged them from the water and threw them at each other and at us. It was useless to protest, and a battle of flowers raged furiously. The water seemed no drawback. Such a mess! The wet flowers were trampled and crushed into the carpets and furniture, and confetti covered everything. The Countess and Wanda seemed not to mind and took it all in good part, but my housewifely soul revolts, and I think it beyond a joke. I fear many things are ruined, besides all my lovely flowers!

Shrove Tuesday.

The soldiers from the barracks opposite made a procession to-day, but it was rather a sorry spectacle. One could only see it at all from the second-floor windows, as the snow banks have attained such a height that the road is entirely obscured from view. The "procession" consisted of a few flower-decked carts, to which had been harnessed, with the officers' permission, some of the artillery horses, all gaily decorated with paper flowers and ribbons. They made their way to the Gravel Hill, well bombarded *en route* with confetti from the second and third floor windows.

I was interested to see the end, so climbed up to the top of the Palace, from where I had an excellent view of the Montagne du Sable, and watched their antics in a mimic battle of flowers. Some of the populace joined them, but I fancy the heavy paper flowers made rather clumsy and uncomfortable ammunition. At any rate, it did not last long. The poor wretches, however, feel that they have kept Carnival, and their pleasures are few. To-morrow, all the gaudy trappings and bright flowers will be carefully collected and burnt with solemn ceremony, early in the morning before mass. To-night our dissipations cease; we, too, must burn our flowers, assume the sackcloth, and have ashes smeared upon our brows on the morrow.

Saturday.

To-morrow is Easter Sunday. This evening I went to the ballroom to see the ceremony of blessing our food for the Festival. A large horseshoe-shaped table was laden with food of every description, to lambs and sucking-pigs. As we have observed a strict Lent and this Holy Week no meat has passed our lips, I, when first I heard of the Blessing of the Food, thought it meant cooked food and all our Easter meat would be cold. I must confess to a relief that it will be otherwise.

Easter evening.

We met for the first time to-day after mass in the reception rooms downstairs. Immediately upon our appearance, a plate with a hard-boiled egg was handed to each of us, whereupon we each offered and accepted a bit of one another's egg, then exchanging compliments. Indeed, it is considered a great insult should a gentleman neglect to offer his egg to any lady in the room.

Monday.

Early, very early, this morning I was disturbed by a terrific squealing under my window. In a moment a second squeal joined the first, both in shrill feminine voices, and in accompaniment to this uproar came a chorus of gruff masculine laughter. Hastily I arose, thrust my feet into my slippers and hurried to my

window, which overlooks the street running behind the Palace. Two maidens I saw shriekingly protesting, but quite ineffectually, against several young men who were dragging them along the street. I could not think what their object was, but by the laughter I saw it was some joke. The kicking, struggling mass resembled a football scrimmage at home, and I could see that the girls were making the fuss more from an idea of keeping up conventionalities than from any real fear of the lads. But my astonishment and also indignation was considerable when, arriving beside one of the large pumps which are placed at intervals along the older streets of Lemberg, the romp ended in a pail of water being emptied over both girls, who, with their faces red, their hair hanging in strings and towelled from their struggles, and their frocks clinging dripping to their figures, presented a disgusting spectacle. The moment the water found its way over them, the girls were permitted to escape, and they quickly disappeared.

I was very indignant at what I termed this outrage, when to my surprise what should I see but the girls returning, all dripping as they were, their hands full of brightly-coloured eggs, which they good-humouredly and impartially distributed amongst their tormentors. I was vastly astonished, and as at that moment my own maid appeared with my hot water, I demanded an explanation of this unseemly public performance of two wenches whom I shrewdly suspected belonged to the Palace kitchens. She

replied in Polish, "It's the sprinkling, *Pani*," and when I asked what that might mean, she looked bewildered and said, "A custom, *Pani*" (*Pani* being miss or mistress in Polish).

When I met the Count and Countess this morning, I described with some heat the scene, and it seemed to me the Count's laughter was a display of questionable taste, at which I was surprised, as he is one of the most truly refined men I have ever met. However, I have always said that morals were more or less a matter of geography, so I contented myself with a mental shrug and concluded that jokes were rather the same, but I could see plainly that the Count was intensely amused at my outraged sensibilities, and every time I caught his eye I saw a twinkle deep therein.

After mass we drove out to the Baroness Cecile's for lunch. I wore my black lace dress and a toque trimmed with red roses, and the Countess wore a beautiful mauve silk trimmed with exquisite lace, and her lovely pearls. We found rather a large party assembled and luncheon was a very elaborate affair. We had finished our dessert when suddenly Count Potocki seized his finger-basin, and raising it high in the air, deliberately emptied the contents upon the Paris hat of the lady upon his right.

With that signal every man at table caught up jugs and carafes and a wild turmoil ensued, the deluge sparing none. The table was a lake of running water. Exquisite creations of French millinery

wilted and became masses of damp straw and muslin ; toilettes from Vienna ran their wet colours into petticoats from Paris ; powder disappeared and fringes hung in straight, unbecoming wisps ; daintily silk-stockinged feet sloshed in their soaked slippers, and I saw re-enacted the scene of this morning, with the difference that now the romp was between lords and ladies, in place of kitchen maids and soldiers.

For myself, I had taken refuge behind a tall palm, where presently I was discovered by a small gentleman who rushed wildly at me, carafe in hand. So enraged was I at the bare thought of such an indignity being perpetrated upon me, that I drew myself up to the full height of my five feet ten inches, glared ferociously at him, and exclaimed in my most tragic tones (it would have been a tragedy for me had my lace dress been spoiled), "*Ne Morgená, Ne Morgená !*"

Poor little man ! Never shall I forget his crestfallen expression. A moment before he had been the life of the mad party, his eyes dancing, his little feet scarcely touching the floor, so quickly was he dodging here, there and everywhere, douching this lady and then that, until at last he had met his Waterloo in me.

"But, Mademoiselle, it is the sprinkling," he stammered.

"I decline to be sprinkled," I replied with withering scorn.

At this point Count Badeni appeared, roaring with laughter (I didn't think it funny), and explained that

I was a foreigner, unused to their customs—in fact, an Englishwoman, as though that would account for any mad eccentricity upon my part—and drew my gallantly inclined, but now thoroughly saddened, persecutor off, while I made my escape to the drawing-room.

In a very short time our carriage was announced, the drenched ladies were wrapped well in rugs, tucked into their equipages, and we were driven swiftly home. The Badenis have been laughing at me all the evening, but I do not care for such silly nonsensical customs. It is bad enough in the stables, but I must say I think it disgusting in the drawing-room. I am told, however, that it is universal in this part of the world—a relic of the old days when each person carried a jar of Holy Water and sprinkled lightly his neighbours and friends. Next Easter Monday I shall stop at home!

CHAPTER VI

Cracow.

NOT having been feeling quite up to the mark, the Countess suggested that as I had not seen Cracow I should go there for a few days' change and return in time for Corpus Christi. She is so kind and thoughtful—they all are, for that matter—and one's lines could not have fallen in pleasanter places. All arrangements for hotel, a carriage and guide to take me everywhere had been made before I arrived. I have been looking at tombs of ancient Polish kings and bishops, and even descended into the crypts and seen the actual coffins, until I feel prepared for interment—quite crumbly, in fact! The veiled crucifix, the reason of our having no Saint Wanda, has been a great source of interest to me.

Princess Wanda was the daughter of a Polish king of the eighth century, and, having decided her own vocation as a religious, was appalled when the King, her father, commanded her to marry—probably for reasons of State. She used to come every day and kneel in prayer before this crucifix, which is wrought with wondrous, almost miraculous, craft. In deep

despair, day after day, she knelt weeping and petitioning succour in her trouble, until one day she heard her name called softly in accents of pity, and raising her eyes, beheld the sorrowful Figure bow His head, and heard the pain-drawn lips speak words of comfort to her. Whereupon she rose and went her way, weeping no more. Each day she came to pray as before, but with a happy countenance, and all her people rejoiced, as she was greatly beloved.

So preparations for the marriage went on apace, until the wedding morning dawned, but, alas, although the bridegroom waited, no bride appeared, and her women found the Princess Wanda pale and still, for, unheeding the pleas of the Man of Sorrows, to bear her earthly burdens with fortitude, in order that she might wear that glorious crown of martyrdom which awaited her hereafter, she had killed herself. There could be no canonization for her after this, although the miracle is conceded and duly recognized. The crucifix, having been taken from the earlier church, now hangs in the Cathedral, and is heavily veiled with crape.

The Cathedral is of great interest, principally because of its many tombs, but tombs and rain are two things one easily gets fed up with. As for the city of Cracow, it is but a melancholy echo of former grandeur; the Florian Gate, with its turrets and draw-bridge crossing the Vistula, and the Castle, are very picturesque, but it is sad to find the city so decayed, though, I daresay, it is to that fact we are

indebted for the picturesqueness thus preserved. Of course, there are some fine family residences still kept up with much grandeur. My guide, who on several occasions proved most amusing, dwelt principally upon the great age of the city, this fact being paramount in his mind.

It is very hot. I have never felt the heat so severely. To-morrow I return to Lemberg, and directly after Corpus Christi we go to Büsk. I shall be glad. The smells here are even worse than in Lemberg. Besides, the cholera is bad in Russia, and I am told that with the usual disregard for others displayed by the Russians, the refuse and bandages from the hospitals are thrown into the Vistula! Such a nice way of introducing the disease into Poland!

Government Palace, Feast of Corpus Christi.

Never have I felt the air so intensely hot as it was when I got up this morning; even the breezes, of which we had but very few to-day, were laden with a heavy heat, more like a blast from a furnace than "gentle zephyrs." Our thinnest muslins were requisitioned from our wardrobes, since we were to walk in the procession. We have all been much exercised over the Count taking a part in this ceremony, as he has been far from well lately, and the results, from the strong midday sun pouring full strength upon his unprotected (and distinctly bald) head, fill us with grave apprehension. This morning

when it proved so intensely hot, we all pleaded again with him to forego taking a part, but he is so devout, and replied so earnestly : " Were he stricken by the sun upon such a solemn occasion, he could ask no better death," that we had no argument with which to meet such perfect faith.

We repaired early to the Cathedral, and the impression of to-day's ceremonies will always remain vividly with me. The interior of the vast church, as we stepped into the soft shadows, was exceedingly soothing and cool, after the glare through which we had driven. Then, when the mass had begun, one saw the altar with its many candles shining, and exquisitely decorated with rare flowers ; the brilliant colours of the richly-embroidered vestments of the clergy and the red and white of the acolytes, all dream-like, and seen " as through a glass darkly," because of the clouds of incense. The bursts of glorious music thrilled my soul with a solemnity almost painful, and I have never realized the Actual Presence as to-day.

When the mass was done, the Archbishop had a marvellous cope, all of cloth of gold, placed around him, and whilst the multitude of clergy hovered close, he raised the monstrance and turned towards the waiting people ; as we fell upon our knees he made the sign of the cross with the monstrance ; then, detaching himself from the group about the altar, slowly descended the steps into the nave, where the rich canopy, woven of cloth of gold, and carried by four sons of as many noble Polish families, was elevated

return to Büsk I was stricken with cholera. I retain a vivid recollection of our drive out to Büsk from Lemberg.

It was the same road we had traversed upon my arrival the September before, but instead of at dusk, we went in the early morning, the sunlight glinting on the landscape and lending a touch of beauty to even the rude cottages of the peasants. In place of plains of stubble, I found myself driving between fields of waving grain, behind the tender green of which the dark pine forests deepened mysteriously. Even over the abandoned graveyard which had so distressed me upon my arrival, nature had thrown lightly a veil of living green, and Büsk was lovely to behold.

But as the days wore away, I grew more languid and disinclined for exertion. I thought it was the heat, but both the Count and Countess looked grave, and they called in the physician, who said I was run down and prescribed a tonic. Then came the news that the cholera had broken out in Poland, supposedly caused by the Russian hospitals throwing their bandages into the Vistula. The next day two of the servants in the Castle succumbed, and in a few hours they were dead.

My turn came. I recall very little of my actual illness, as I was kept under the influence of strong doses of opium the whole time. Four nuns took their turns watching beside my bed day and night. The room was hung with sheets saturated with a solution of carbolic,

and they would not let me die ! Never shall I forget as long as I live, the absolute heroism of the Countess Badeni. Despite the warnings from doctor and nuns, each day she came herself to visit me and be assured that all was being done that human agency could command. Of course, all this I learned upon my recovery.

My convalescence I remember only too well. I was very annoyed that my devoted doctor had been called away to attend a relative, so I was told, and a stranger took his place. And then—I was so hungry ! To this day I can harden my heart to every plea but that of hunger ! The only food I was allowed for *days* was a teaspoonful of sour milk every quarter of an hour. As soon as I was strong enough to feed myself, I lay with my watch in one hand, a spoon in the other, with the knowledge that if I anticipated or exceeded my allowance, it was suicide.

Mine was the one, out of nine cases in the Castle, which recovered, and I grieve to add that my devoted doctor, Proliaska, fell a victim to the epidemic. He had indeed “gone a journey.” This was, however, kept from my knowledge by my kind friends until some months later—when I was with them in Vienna and I said to the Countess, would she help me to select a handsome present to take to him upon our return ? Then she gently told me. My own mother could not have shown more solicitude nor thoughtful care for me during my illness and convalescence than did these kindly foreigners, and I take this opportunity of expressing once again my enduring gratitude.

January, 1893.

Again in the corridor of the Hofburg I have seen a Royal wedding procession. This time it was the marriage of the Archduchess Margaret Sophia, daughter of the Archduke Charles Louis, and niece of the Emperor Franz Josef, with Duke Albert of Würtemberg. To me this was a most interesting event, as, until to-day, the bride was Abbess of the Convent for noble ladies at the Heradschin Palace in Prague. It is merely a religious retreat, and does not necessitate any vows, (but the Abbess is always an Archduchess, and that position entitles her to a separate suite and revenue, exactly as though she were married ;) but she is quite free to resign the office and assume the full responsibility of a married woman, including the encumbrance of a husband, when she feels so inclined.

This Archduchess is a very pretty one, and she looked really lovely in her bridal robes. Everyone was remarking how fortunate Duke Albert was, which is a remark I have noted is not always made when an Archduchess marries. The procession was quite in the same order as at the wedding of Princess Louise of Tuscany, only, with the exception of the Emperor, the principals were changed. To-night the Countess remarked when we were talking it over : “ The time may not be far distant when we may have seats in the chapel, not stand about in the corridors ! ”

I wonder what she meant ?

CHAPTER VII

DIRECTLY after Easter we went to Büsk, the Count having decided that it was too trying for us to remain in Lemberg during the heat. After the cholera the summer before, the authorities endeavoured to get the city into a somewhat more sanitary condition, and the Ghetto was canvassed from house to house to try and impress the wretched Jews with some idea of cleanliness. Alas, I fear, with small success. The Catholic Poles are very bitter against the Jews. I begged to be allowed to visit the quarter, but the Countess was so genuinely distressed at the mere idea that I gave it up at once. Büsk was delightful in the early summer, the whole place throbbing with life, both animal and vegetable. We had many house guests, and when the races came on in June, we entertained largely, many distinguished personages staying in the Palace in Lemberg for the three days. I fear these races did not make a great impression upon me, but turning to my journal for 1893, I find the following :

June.

Yesterday was a well filled day, no idle moments then ! An elaborate luncheon party was given,

after which we drove in state to the races. We had four carriages—each with four horses, and outriders in the blue and silver livery of the Badenis, and we were escorted by a detachment of Hussars. The Count, accompanied by the Princess Catoriska from Cracow, was in the first carriage. The Countess, with Count Potobeter, in the second, and Wanda and I in the third. The fourth was occupied by cousins of the Countess. It was a gay sight, and a queer feeling to bowl swiftly along, the galloping horses of the escort beating the smooth, hard road on either side, conscious of one's exalted position and best clothes. It was a very different feeling, indeed, from that inspired by my humble part in the only other public procession I have participated in, that of the Corpus Christi celebration last year. As we entered the enclosure and drove at a spanking pace up the course, each carriage stopping exactly in front of the entrance to the boxes, cheers went up from the assembled crowd, the band played the National Anthem of Austria, "Gott erhalte," and the races began.

The steeplechasing interested me the most. The Austrian officers are such marvellous riders, veritable centaurs, and the Austrian ~~school~~ *of haute école* is the last remaining example of the old Spanish method, probably the most wonderful equestrianism in the world, certainly in Europe, if, perhaps, we except the Arabians. Betting ran pretty high, and I must say the losers bore their disappointments



COUNT BADINI AND FAMILY AT THE LEMBERG RACES.

(especially the ladies) with considerably more equanimity than most English people would have done.

We returned to the Government Palace as we had come, and the Countess gave a large ball that evening. The music was delightful, the floor perfect, and as I was devoted to dancing I enjoyed it all. The lights, the flowers, the jewels and lovely dresses, and plenty of good partners, all contributed to a successful entertainment. So great was the success that no one noted the passing of the hours, until someone mischievously drew the blinds, and lo! the morning sun streamed into the room. Cries of astonishment and laughter greeted this, and the guests who had remained poured out upon the balcony. Others, wiser in their day and generation, left hurriedly before the searching light sought out and found spoilt complexions, and the crow's-feet of fatigue. What sights we looked! Our wilted finery which had seemed so handsome a few hours before looked tawdry: hair, so elaborately curled and dressed, dishevelled and lack-lustre in the golden light. One look at the rest, I seized Wanda's hand and we fled! I had no wish to disillusion others, as others had disillusioned me!

After the races we were fairly quiet. We went again to Lemberg for Corpus Christi, and the Countess and Wanda paid some visits of a few weeks each, leaving me to the quiet of Büsk and my own devices. Then came a visit of three days' duration

from the Cabinet Ministers. Just what the political significance of that visit was, I never knew; but I have fancied that the Commercial Treaty between Austria and Russia, which was completed the following year, was drafted. At any rate there were long conferences, and every ingenious arrangement was provided to secure uninterrupted councils. Private telegraph service was installed in the guest rooms—quite independent of the Count's own service.

The ground floor of the Castle was divided by beautifully upholstered temporary partitions, which, without spoiling the general effect, ensured the Ministers complete privacy for any short conversations. The guest rooms, arranged in suites, were situated in two wings, joined to the main building of the Castle by conservatories filled with choice flowers. Banquets were given, and as a military band was stationed in the great hall, we essayed a dance one night, but as we three were the only ladies it did not last long.

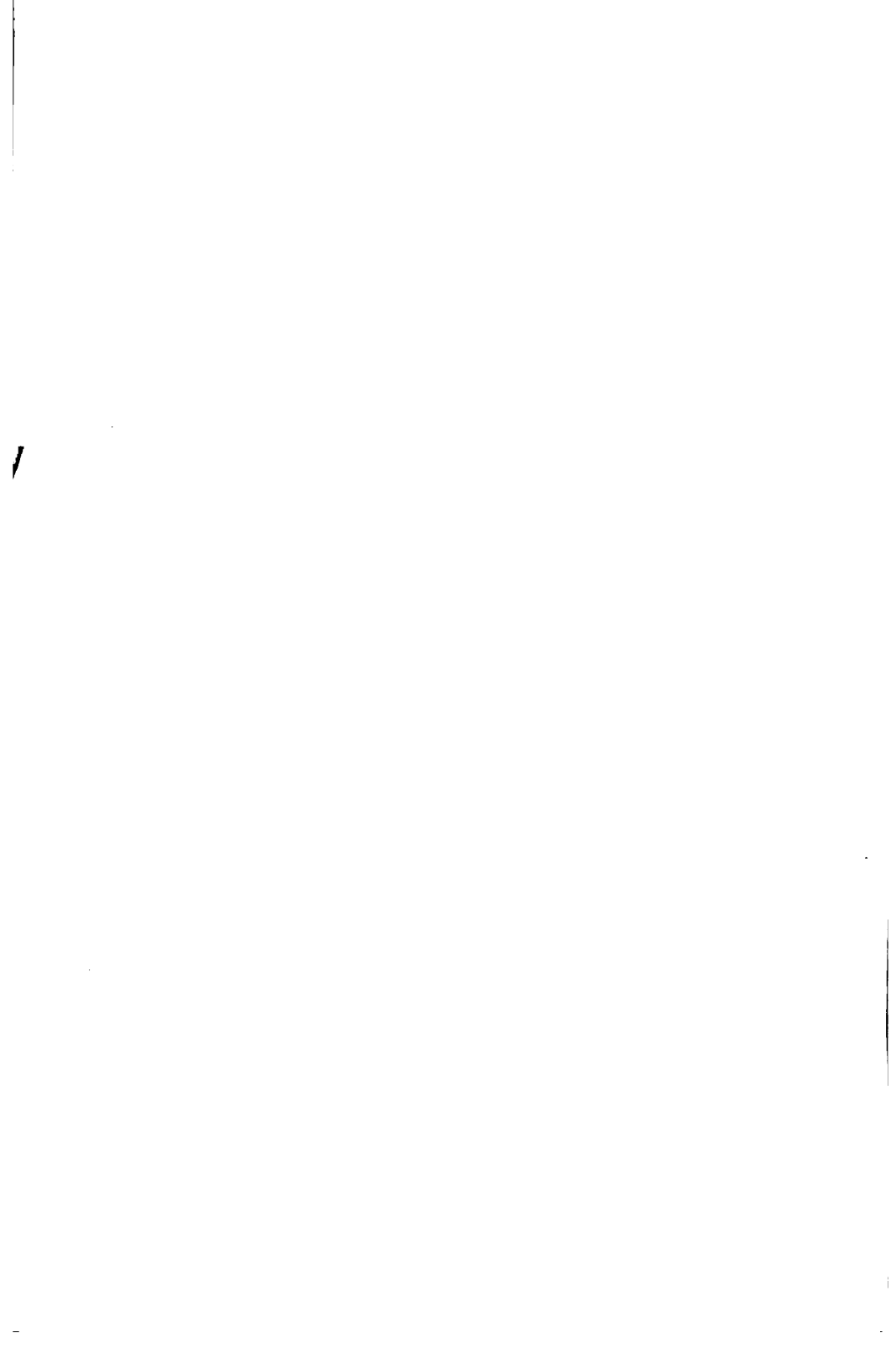
Shooting took place within the preserves of the park, the sportsmen leaving at dawn and returning in time for *déjeuner*, the bags consisting of pheasants, hares, Siberian grouse and, I regret to add, foxes.

The afternoon of the third and last day of the visit, we were having our coffee, as was the custom, upon the loggia in the front of the Castle. Someone—I think it was Prince Alfred Windischgrätz, the President—expressed a desire to see the famous Lippicany mares from the Emperor's stable, and



Bull
15.10.03

COUNTESS WANDA ON HORSEBACK.



at that time belonging to the Count's stud. The order was given, and all the horses were brought around, each led by a groom in the stable livery of white and blue linen. Pure Arabians, American trotters, and riding and carriage horses passed us in a procession, proudly arching and curveting as though they knew quite well that they were being "shown off." It occurred to the Count that he would like a little more animation, so, calling for a long stock-whip, he mounted a small grassy mound, around which the drive-way wound, and touched each horse as he passed. At first they only hastened their walk, but in a few minutes they broke into a gallop, shaking the grooms off as they ran, and circling round and round. The Count kept them going with a marvellous skill. I never recall a prettier sight than that. The Count, having permitted them to slacken their speed, and the grooms having caught and led them away, laughingly made us a mocking bow, dropped the rôle of ring-master, and springing up the steps rejoined his guests, once more Count Badeni, the Governor of Galicia, a Minister of the Emperor, and the inimitable diplomat and charming gentleman.

Early in the autumn, we went on a visit to Vienna, and much earlier than usual took up residence at the Palace in Lemberg.

About this time the Badenis started on a round of visits, leaving me alone at the Palace in Lemberg. I found it not unpleasant to be able to plan my

own days quite irrespective of other people's convenience, and I determined to see Lemberg as I had wished to do from the beginning, that is to say, the nooks and corners and places which, when I broached the subject, the Countess always said: "Oh, that's a place no lady ever goes!" I had visions also of bargains in the way of furs and embroideries, so it was with a gay spirit apparently, but trepidation deep within my heart at the thought of the Badenis discovering my escapade, that I dressed in my oldest and least conspicuous clothes, and set out on foot for the Ghetto.

The Synagogue is, of course, the central feature, around which the Ghetto lay. It is a tall building, Oriental in character and of an extremely dingy gorgeousness. In front is an open space of rough grass and boulders, and on the three open sides were small huts and tents erected as a temporary Bazar. I presume the wretched Jews always feel insecure and constantly hold themselves in readiness for flight. The anti-Semitic feeling was running very high just at that period.

Of course the Jewish question is always a burning one in Austria-Poland, but Count Badeni was a remarkably broad-minded man, and insisted that the Jews, being Austrian subjects, were entitled to protection, and must be treated with justice. All efforts on the part of Poles to boycott the Jewish merchants met with discouragement from him. It was by his great tactfulness in such questions that

the Count Badeni rose head and shoulders above his predecessors, and indeed his colleagues. Of course, it was impossible to entirely curb the individual bitterness of the Catholic Poles, but it was kept under, and later when he was Prime Minister to Austria the Count refused to confirm the election of Dr. Lueger as Burgomaster of Vienna, for the reason that he was one of the leaders of the anti-Semitic agitations. Such an action indisputably showed his fearlessness and his breadth of mind and lack of prejudices. Had it not been for the machinations of his bitter-minded enemies, there is no doubt that Count Badeni would stand to-day a rock that Austria could rest upon, and the waves of troublous times dash harmlessly against.

In order to reach the Ghetto, I made a wide *détour* around the fashionable quarter of Lemberg, where there was a chance of my being recognized, and passed through roads deep with mud and filth. Groups of Rebeccas clustered around the common pumps, and their dirtiness was most revolting. As I neared the Square groups of Jews, with their long black curls and beards, their tattered, dirty, black garments, and beady eyes gleaming between the slits of lids, crowded every corner talking, talking, talking. A Jew never works, he supplies the talk and brains, and makes the Poles work for him. It is marvellous how they manage it.

The little, low mud huts, which answered as shops, were filled with goods of various descriptions.

In one I went to match a piece of fur, which errand I made as my excuse for a visit to that quarter. I saw such heaps and piles of skins of the most lovely quality, brought from Russia I presume, and on their way westward. My afternoon had not been as exciting as I had hoped for, and I returned home very muddy, rather disgusted and distinctly disappointed, but not discouraged in my search for adventure.

Just at this time there was rather more anarchism rife than was usual, and there was a strict surveillance kept by the secret police over all suspects, and many houses and restaurants were being closely watched. In a low part of Lemberg was what was known as the "Volks Theater," and there I determined to go.

One evening, after a rather early dinner, I stole out of the Palace, dressed as plainly and as poorly as I could manage. I flitted through the dusky streets, until I arrived at the low, narrow building which resembled anything rather than a theatre. Well do I recall the shaking knees and sinking heart with which I entered, paid for and took my seat. There was a stage at the far end of the room, very roughly raised a few feet from the floor. The seats were comfortless and the air stifling, gas and uncleanliness fighting for supremacy. I was full early, and I had never felt so conspicuous in all my life, nor have I since. Looks fraught with suspicion of they knew not what were cast upon me, and I was only grateful that no one would sit near me. I was

surrounded by a ring of empty seats. Three men entered, climbed up and seated themselves upon the stage, proceeding to supply the overture from two violins and an oboe. The effect produced upon my already quivering nerves was most depressing, but when the curtain was drawn aside and the play began, I felt in the depths indeed. The actors all stared at me, and I really wished I had not come.

The play was *A Peasant's Tragedy*, and although I could only understand an occasional word, the really wonderful facial expressions and numerous, almost pantomimic, gestures made the story quite clear to me. The hero and heroine married, the villain loaned money—needless to say he was a Jew. After a period he demanded payment from the wife, she yielded, then died in despair. The last scene showed the wretched husband alone in a horribly dirty, bare room. There was no applause, but long, distinctly audible sighs and an occasional laugh were the only encouragement the actors received. I was glad enough to escape from the evil-smelling place, but my adventure had only begun.

As we were leaving, I noticed a rather neat, refined-looking girl close in front of me, and with her a man, a typical university student of small means. Just as we reached the entrance, the police swooped down upon the crowd, seized the girl and man, he was little more than a youth, hustled them into two *Einspänner* which were waiting, and galloped away. I stood quite still for a minute, indeed all

the crowd did likewise, it had all happened so quickly, and then, like the rumbles of a coming storm, murmurs rose on every side, and I was suddenly conscious of sullen, angry glances and a muttered Polish phrase which I knew meant "The Spy!" My heart beat to suffocation, but I realized I must get away or I should be mobbed, and as fast as my trembling legs could carry me I flew. A louder murmur followed me and I heard footsteps. Atalanta never sped more fleetly than did I, as in and out those streets I flew, my heart beating wildly with terror, and ever those dogging footsteps hurrying behind me.

As I came near the citadel, a rapidly driven *Einspanner* passed me directly under the street-lamp, and seated between two secret service men I caught a glimpse of the white despairing face of the girl I had just seen arrested. Never to my dying day shall I forget the look upon her face, the expression of horror and utter helplessness. My own terror was extreme, and I doubled on my tracks like a hare. At last I gained the Palace and never was sanctuary more welcome, for the ominous sound of those following footsteps rang in my ears.

For the several days between this and the return of the Badenis, I kept closely within doors, and trembled at the sound of every strange voice. They returned in the afternoon and we chatted over our tea: the Count amused himself quizzing me with regard to my movements during their absence. My heart sank as I realized that in some way un-

known to me he had heard of my escapades, and my nerves, already strung to the highest pitch, were quivering as I fenced his questions. Finally he leisurely helped himself to a cake, carefully making his selection (how vividly I recall every movement !), and casually remarked :

“ I hope, Mademoiselle, you enjoyed the entertainment provided at the ‘ Volks Theater ? ’ ”

It was too much. I gasped, gulped, and finding no words, covering my face with my hands, burst into tears.

Then the Count said gently, in a grave tone :

“ Mademoiselle, you ran a great risk. Every movement of yours has been reported to me. I will say no more as I think that the fright you had at the theatre has been a sufficient punishment, but I may say that your risk was greater than you know. In the description received by the police of the two Nihilists, that of the girl tallied so well with you that it was only owing to the intervention of the two secret service men in my employ that you are not now lying in the citadel. And, let me tell you, my friend, it is a place far more easily entered in this country than escaped from. Now, we will say no more ; ” and never again was my little flutter in adventures mentioned.

CHAPTER VIII

DURING the following summer and autumn, Count Badeni looked tired and worried. Rebellion was rife and the anti-Semitic feeling was strongly prevalent. The Badenis decided to remain at Büsk until very late in the autumn, leaving only in time for the Christmas festivities in Lemberg. Several large house-parties were arranged for at Büsk, and amongst the various amusements prepared for the guests a boar hunt was organized. I was greatly interested in this form of hunting, and, as I had previously been permitted to occupy a seat in one of the carts used by the sportsmen in shooting deer, I begged to be allowed to accompany the hunters in this instance, but Count Badeni laughed at me and remarked :

“We did not save you from the cholera, Mademoiselle, to throw you to the wild beasts !”

Knowing this was a positive refusal, I did not ask again ; but nevertheless my interest continued to be quite as keen, and all preparations were watched by me with the greatest interest. The snow came earlier than usual and the days grew very short.

We had many guests and much gaiety, so time passed rapidly, until one day a runner came to the Castle with a message from the head keeper saying a herd of the boar had been located. The wild boar live right away in the depths of those almost impenetrable pine forests, and for days, in some cases weeks, before the hunting actually takes place beaters are at work routing out the herd. Of course, when we got the news there was a great bustle of preparation, for rather a large party had been asked.

On the morning of the third day, reinforced by some guests from the neighbouring estates, the hunting party gathered in front of the Castle. From the shelter of the glass-enclosed and well-heated loggia, I watched the assembling and departure of the hunters. All, including the loaders and keepers, were dressed in white cloth, heavy white felt boots coming well up to their thighs, and short jackets of white fur; caps with large lappets fastening under the chin and big gauntlet gloves, also of the white fur, completed the outfit. The sunlight glinted now and then fiery reflections from the polished knives in their belts, as like a troop of daylight ghosts they moved silently about; only the very modern rifle which each carried made them real. As they crossed the fields of snow the effect was strangely startling; a few yards directly in front of me had been a dozen or more particularly strong and healthy specimens of mankind together with their attendants, when lo! like magic, one by one, and

in pairs, they totally disappeared, and not a stick or stone was there which might have concealed them. Then, behold, with a like suddenness they reappeared, clearly outlined against a background of dark pines, on the horizon. The reason was quite simple, although the effect was startling. It was that the white costume blended so perfectly with the snow that the keenest and most alert of wild animals might be excused for not recognizing his enemy at sight.

So interested was I in this (to me) new sport that I lost no opportunity of gathering bits of information from every source available.

Arrived in the depths of the forest, each gun is allotted his station, usually behind or close to an enormous pine tree, preferably one to which much snow has clung, as he is thus less conspicuously displayed to the animals. During the interim, which they must endure before the herd rushes down upon them pell-mell, the party amuse themselves by picking off the hares and—to my horror when I heard of it—foxes, which are easily seen moving over the snow. Sometimes the wait is long and tedious, though at the Count's shooting party things were so well arranged that only about two hours had passed when a noise, something like distant thunder, was heard.

On such occasions the keepers straighten themselves like soldiers at attention, all the gentlemen hastily unsheath their hunting knives and stand on the alert. The noise grows louder ; the ground

shakes ; small, frightened creatures flee in all directions. The man, whose first boar hunt this may be, trembles with suppressed nervous excitement, as, between the vistas made by the pine trees, a black cloud seems rolling down on him. Then one hears the thud, thud, thud of hoofs upon the snow, and the herd of wild boar are upon the huntsmen. Each sportsman, selecting a large tusker, fires. Instantly the herd is thrown into confusion. The wounded animals rear and snort, for it is seldom that a boar is killed outright, and then he charges the first sportsman likely to have hurt him. This is the exciting instant ; this the moment fraught with danger ; and it happens sometimes, as it did on this occasion, that one man, having sent his shot home, indulges his interest in his neighbour's sport to an extent which endangers his own life. One of the Count's party, having chosen a rugged old pine, with huge patches of snow clinging to its bark, was to all intents and purposes invisible, and as the herd rushed past him selected a magnificent old tusker and shot him in the groin. It was a splendid shot, and the creature, huge and ugly, reared himself in the air with a despairing cry, then, with a snort of rage, he wheeled and made for the spot where his assailant stood. As he rushed forward, the man who had killed his prey outright, in his eagerness to see the coming battle, as the hunter had his knife in hand ready to give the *coup de grâce*, forgot or neglected the warnings of his loader to keep close against his own tree, and stepped

thus we proceeded to the church, where the coffin was placed upon a high catafalque in front of the chancel and surrounded by lighted candles.

After the Requiem Mass the procession formed again in exactly the same order as it had come to the church, but it was reinforced by numbers of friends, and to walk slowly the entire distance from the church in Lemberg, climbing the hill which is crowned by the cemetery, the crunching hard snow slipping under one's feet, and the intense cold piercing one's heaviest clothing, is indeed a trying ordeal. As the long procession dragged its weary length many fell behind to chat with friends caught sight of in the church, and only hurried to the front as the cemetery gates were reached. Arrived there, the coffin was placed within the family vault with appropriate prayers and ceremony, and everyone drove home in the carriages which were awaiting them. It was a wearying and trying experience, and one I would not care to undergo again.

I recall an amusing story which the Count told when he was explaining some funeral customs, peculiar to Poland, and so quaintly Boccacian it sounded to me, I repeat it here :

The wife of a certain small landed proprietor some distance in the country, fell extremely ill. The attending doctors told the husband that her span of life was a mere matter of weeks, and probably days. Some business affair arose which demanded his immediate and personal attention, and as his wife was

being well cared for by the good sisters, he made a hurried journey to Cracow. His business finished, he bethought himself that the workmen in his village were extremely primitive, and now was a most excellent opportunity to purchase a really well made coffin suitable for so good a help-mate as his wife had proved herself to be.

This he did, and, furthermore, had it packed full of provisions to be used at the funeral feast, and brought it home with him. But to the astonishment of all, the good lady recovered. The coffin was hurriedly consigned to the stable, and the thoughtful husband went about his business rejoicing at the miracle of his wife's renewed health. But his rejoicings were to be of but brief duration and soon were rudely interrupted, for the lady was a notable house-wife, and as soon as she was strong enough went upon a tour of inspection through the house and even the surrounding outbuildings, and there in the stable she came upon the coffin so considerately provided by her husband. The poor man's endeavours to plausibly explain the presence of so gruesome a relic without hurting his wife's feelings, although his intentions had been so laudable, gave rise to jealous suspicions upon her part, and many complications arose. But she is still living and vows she'll see him buried first, which I daresay she will.

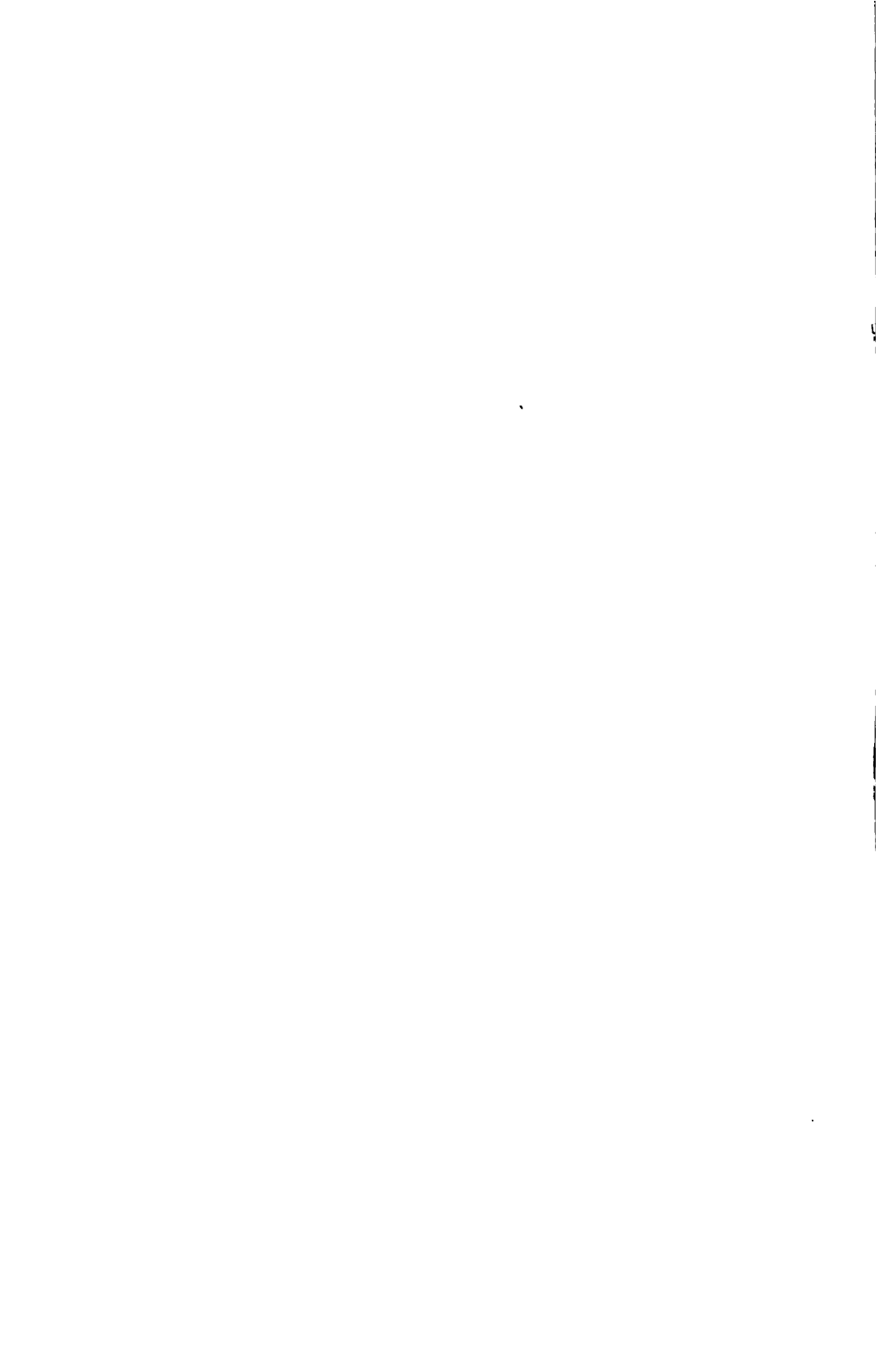
CHAPTER IX

IN March, 1894, the Countess Badeni, Wanda and I left Lemberg to spend a few weeks in Abbazia, on the shores of the Adriatic. We left Lemberg on Sunday evening, crossed the Carpathian Mountains, and arrived in Buda-Pest about midday on Monday.

In my time I have experienced some hard journeys, but that night's travel lives in my mind as the most completely comfortless of any I ever made. Our carriage had only been arranged for two persons, therefore it was necessary for Wanda and me to sleep, or rather recline, for sleep was out of the question, across each other, which mode is not conducive to ease and comfort. The railway lines were very uneven and we were shaken and jostled from side to side, and the bitter winds penetrated our railway carriage and chilled us to the bone. Finally, in a desperation born of such utter discomfort, I drew aside the heavy curtains, and, regardless of the cold, looked out upon the dreariest landscape I ever viewed. The summits of the Carpathian Mountains are almost devoid of forests, and it is only occasional glimpses



BUDA-PEST.—THE CHURCH OF ST. MATTHEW AND THE NEW BASTION.



of isolated clumps of trees one sees. The huge slopes were covered with a thick blanket of snow, stretching dully and monotonously about us as far as eye could reach. Now and then, from behind her veil of broken snow-clouds, a pale moon cast a lachrymose glance which just sufficed to show the shadows of the gaunt grey wolves that roam the ranges of the Carpathians in hungry hordes. I was told that they have been known to jump upon the passing trains in their eagerness for prey.

We arrived at Buda-Pest at two-thirty, seeing the city for the first time, all its beauty gilded by the touch of the bright noonday sun. A wonderful place this, where Western civilization and methods meet and mingle with the splendour and extravagance of the East. After twelve hours there, we travelled over the Styrian Alps, which, although in parts wild and snow-covered, are very different from the Carpathians. As we descended to the foothills, we passed vineyards and well-kept farms. When we came to Fiume, I had my first glimpse of the blue Adriatic, shining far, far below us, as a jewel in the frame of mountains. The soft breezes caressed our faces and brought sweet scents of fruit and spring blossoms to us. It was enchanting, and when the daylight stole glimmeringly upon us, revealing the exquisite colours of sea and land, the red-roofed, clustering houses on the coast below, the white-winged boats dotting the deep blue water of the bay embraced by foothills green and fertile, the mountains rising

tier upon tier behind, first dark and beetling, as though jealous of their fairer neighbours, then shrouded softly purple by the haze of distance, and last, but crowning all and heaven-kissing, the snow-tipped peaks, it was a sight which lingers amongst one's fairest memories.

At six o'clock we took boat at Fiume and crossed the bay to Abbazia, where we arrived at nine o'clock. A small village built up of beautiful modern villas, the little harbour lively with pleasure craft, and in its new prettiness Abbazia is the very antithesis of the quaint old beauty of the Fiume we had just left. Our rooms were in a detached villa and our meals taken at a big modern hotel, the Hôtel Stephanie, so named in honour of the Crown Princess.

There were a number of noble Polish families here, but the first few days were quite spoiled for me by the caprices in which the Countess indulged. Annoyed at being sequestered in this dull little place, she did not scruple to vent her annoyance upon my unoffending head. Wanda, of course, followed her mother, although she also came in for a share of the Countess's *mauvaise humeur*, so none of us enjoyed ourselves. Then the Governor came and somehow—as always happened when he appeared—everything righted itself and we were soon the centre of a lively circle. Although the resources of Abbazia were limited, as there was no casino, various excursions, were organized, and Wanda, being attractive and also of an impressionable age, my time was well filled



THE MOUNTAIN FALLS ABOVE FUME.

in performing the duties of chaperon as proxy to the Countess. In a letter to my mother, written at this time, I said : “ There is a very rich young man of very good family who seems much struck with Wanda. They would be delighted to get him ”—but I do not recall that desire to settle Wanda in safe matrimony lightened my duties in the slightest degree.

Shortly after our arrival some of the Poles chartered a steamer, and we went an excursion to Piccolo, on the Island of Lussin, lying to the south of the bay. The morning was as nearly perfect as possible when we started ; everything seemed propitious, and I looked forward to a happy sail through the blue sea amidst the lovely islands with which it abounds ; but alas ! it proved true in this instance that realization is the grave of anticipation, for when we were about an hour out, a fierce sirocco sprang up. The boat, a narrow Italian steamer, rolled and pitched alarmingly. One by one the band of merrymakers succumbed. The Countess was not only painfully ill, but was terrified by the storm. She would not allow me to quit her side, and my difficulties were enhanced by the fact that, being an excellent sailor, I became extremely hungry in the keen sea air, but my poor Countess being so ill I dared not mention lunch. Another thing which added to my unhappiness was that from where I was seated I had an excellent view of Wanda who, being also a good sailor, was disporting herself on the bridge with a most attractive detrimental at her side. I was indeed

upon the horns of a dilemma. However, the storm passed, although a cold wind continued to blow, and we landed on the island in safety. A charming spot, brilliant tropical vegetation, and bright, picturesque peasantry, who were different indeed from the dull, lethargic peasants we were accustomed to see in Poland. I enjoyed the few hours we spent there, but when the time for departure drew near, I had considerable difficulty in persuading the Countess that the return journey would not be bad, as we would have the wind with us, not in our faces as we had had in the morning. At one time her courage failed, and there seemed a prospect of our being marooned on Lussin for good. After considerable wavering, she eventually decided that as an Englishwoman I must know all about the sea, and she therefore consented to return with the party. I regret to be obliged to add that her faith certainly seemed to have been misplaced, for the return journey was very nearly as bad as the outward one; but at least the end was in sight.

During this stormy, rather dismal little voyage, I saw a tiny, isolated island with an old feudal castle almost hidden by the tall cypresses and pines which had grown up around it. This, I was told, was a Jesuit monastery, where brothers of the Order of Loyola are retired in extreme old age, and also where young brothers or students are sent to recover from a temporary aberration which had, perhaps, been responsible for some indiscretion, either political or heretical. Certainly it was a forbidding place, dark

and almost gruesome in the midst of the brilliant landscape surrounding it.

Some cousins of the Countess had established themselves in Abbazia for the winter and entertained largely, and in their cook all considered they possessed a treasure. Fish is the Poles' only substitute for flesh in Lent, and by the time the Lenten forty days of fast are drawing to a close no fish tastes nice ; but at the cousins' house there was a much appreciated exception to that rule, for the fish tasted as nice as ever, and the various sauces served with it were voted delicious. Everyone praised the genius of the cook. Then, alas ! it leaked out that all these sauces were made with meat, and all the toothsome fish had been cooked in the strongest meat juice. The cook defied his Church and his master, but no one was grateful when he was denounced.

At last Good Friday dawned. As a rule no excursions leave the place that day. Every person is either at church or taking penitential walks along the stony paths which abound in this district, but this Good Friday will live long in the memory of the inhabitants, for on that day a terrible tragedy occurred. Two young Counts, the fiancée of one of them, and a boatman, took a small rowing-boat and went out. The sea was far too rough for such frail craft and soon they got upon the rocks and overturned, a dash of red blood on the waves was seen by the horrified witnesses on shore, and that was all. One body was washed up, but no trace of the rest

was to be found. It was concluded that they had been eaten by the sharks with which the bay is infested. Three years later, when I went to Abbazia with the Archduchess Elizabeth Marie of Austria, I found the spot marked by an exquisite statue of the *Stella Maris*, the Madonna, Star of the Sea.

After Easter, the German Emperor, with the Empress and their family, arrived at the Villa Amalia, a large, white, imposing villa belonging to the Emperor of Austria, and in order to have rather more privacy a part of the Public Gardens was railed in for Imperial use. The Princess Victoria Louise was a tiny baby at this time, and I saw the Emperor lift her out of her perambulator and hold her in his arms as any *bourgeois* papa might have done. The Imperial boys were mischievous little fellows, full of fun and pranks. One day I was walking with Wanda and some little boys, cousins of hers. The children were dressed in the French fashion, with short stockings which leave the legs bare. As we passed the Gardens, the young princes were playing, but quickly espied the small Poles, and running towards the railings shouted, in very poor English :

“What fat legs ! What fat legs !”

At this time the Austrian Emperor Franz Josef paid a visit to Wilhelm II. of Germany, who was his guest, and great political importance was attached to this ostentatious display of friendship. Abbazia was in gala attire, and the quiet, dull little place of a fortnight before became metamorphosed into a gaily



GENERAL VIEW OF ABBAZIA.

decorated, brilliantly illuminated resort, with bands constantly playing, and crowded with the peoples of all nations, from the swaggering Magyar officer and the "Terrible Turk" to the simple curé of the village church, who strolled, amazed, and perhaps a little appalled, at the sudden changes wrought by the advent of Royalty. The Queen of Roumania, better known as that romantic personality, Carmen Sylva, and the aged Grand Duke of Luxemburg were also here. The latter I saw frequently when I took my place in the suite of the Archduchess.

As my time with the Countess Badeni was now finished, I decided to make a retreat in the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Vienna, formerly a school. (This most exclusive order of the Religious of the Sacred Heart) who receive as their pupils princesses of the reigning families, was established about one hundred and fifty years ago by a Madame Barat. The habit still worn, a full black dress with wide sleeves, while a wide white goffered cap holds the black veil behind, is an echo of the fashions of the Faubourg St. Germaine of that period. The school, formerly in Vienna, has now been removed to Penzing, about fifteen miles from the capital, for the reason that, owing to the increased growth of Vienna, buildings of considerable height have been erected, "overlooking the beautiful gardens of the Sacred Heart Convent," as the advertisements of the flats set forth, thus robbing the nuns and their pupils of privacy.

Now the corridors are silent, and the schoolrooms unused, except that the bedrooms at times of retreat are occupied by ladies; girls no longer play in the gardens and the nuns take their exercise only in the shadiest, most secluded parts of the grounds. Three times a year a Jesuit preaches a week's retreat, and then the convent is crowded with ladies. It was for one of these periods that I went to make my retreat upon leaving the Countess Badeni. Many notable ladies were there, and I had the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with Madame Merry del Val. I also met there the Countess Karolyi, who asked me to stay with her at Csurgó, her splendid castle in Hungary, and it was there that I met the Countess Coudenhove, who was head of the suite of the Archduchess Elizabeth Marie of Austria.

For three peaceful, happy months I lived in the convent, not, of course, in the cloister, as the order is strictly enclosed, but in the part which had been the school. Several of the nuns would come to my part of the building during the day, but after the evening prayers, when the Great Silence fell, they kept in the enclosed part and I only saw the lay sisters, who are for the service of the nuns, bringing me my evening meal. The remembrance of that Great Silence remains with me as the most impressive of all the devotional times I have ever experienced. The huge convent, with here and there a light glimmering, perhaps a nun in black draperies floating softly, silently past, but not a sound, not a breath, scarcely

a movement; even the candles before the small shrines in the corridors burned with hardly a flicker. All the intensity of this great place was concentrated in prayer and meditation, and we were enwrapped in the soft, compelling peace of an indescribable spiritual elevation. During my stay in the convent, the Great Silence was broken, probably for the only time since the establishment of the order. It happened this way:

Four young Countesses, each the daughter of a former pupil in the convent, were to receive their first Communion from the hand of the Cardinal Archbishop, Cardinal Grusha of Vienna, in the Sacred Heart Chapel, as their mothers had done before them. Many and beautiful were the preparations made by the nuns for this event. Exquisite flowers were arranged upon the altar, and the seats around the altar rails were replaced by *prie-dieu* upholstered in pale blue velvet. It was all finished by six in the afternoon, even the candles being in place, and when the chaplain of the Archbishop called to see that all was in readiness, he was delighted with everything until he noted the blue of the *prie-dieu*.

"They must be white," he declared.

The proverbial flutter in the dovecot is an inadequate description of the state of consternation into which this mandate threw the gentle nuns. However, nothing ever being so bad that it might not be worse, and plenty of white velvet and brass-headed

nails being available in the convent, to say nothing of the many pairs of willing hands eager to help with the work, amongst which it was my privilege to be selected, the re-covering commenced. Scarcely had the material been distributed and all directions given, when the clanging of the bell signalled the commencement of the Great Silence. Each worker had a candle to light her labours, otherwise no illumination in the chapel ; the noise of the hammering echoed in the vaulted roof, otherwise no sound. Hours passed and we worked rapidly, but as silently as possible, and at eleven we had finished. We separated without a word, to meet in our stalls for the function at six in the morning.





CSURGÓ, HUNGARY. COUNTESS KÁROLYI'S HOME.

CHAPTER X

THE carriage was waiting for me when I arrived at the station of Stuhlweissenburg in Hungary, which is not far from the frontier dividing Austria from Hungary. Swiftly I was borne over the five miles which lay between Stuhlweissenburg and Csurgó, through a country of vast, undulating plains stretching for hundreds of miles to mountains on the far horizon, a country of forest-covered hills and green vineyards, of small lakes and large ponds, of immense fields of sugar-beet, of wide stretches of waving golden grain. I saw herds of magnificent cattle, grey and white, with ferocious looking horns of extreme length, peacefully grazing in the sun. Then, crowning an eminence and smiling a radiant welcome down upon me, rose the white turrets of Csurgó.

A gracious greeting and warm I received from the Countess Karolyi, as became the châtelaine of so grand a name and place, and the children—dainty, delicate little creatures—soon carried me off to see their pets and treasures. Hungary has spilt her blood in many a tumultuous turmoil, and many more she

may pass through ere she triumphs and wins her freedom, but when or how, the iron crown with bent cross will stand always for the fairest land and proudest people the sun ever shone upon. I thought I had never seen so beautiful a country as that surrounding Csurgó, and I wondered if it were always bathed in the same brilliant sunshine. My wonder was soon assuaged, as only a few days after my arrival an electric storm passed over us. We had no warning except a clap of thunder and the sudden darkness. Then it was as if all the fiends of hell were loosed, while the crash and din of a lordly battle in the heavens deafened our ears. The rain fell in sheets, and what glimpses we could get of the hills about us showed forests bowing and bending to the very earth beneath the deluge. The blue flame of the lightning seemed never to cease, and searched out spots in the landscape to illuminate with vivid intensity. The noise of the falling water, the rushing of the wind through the tossing trees, and the mighty boom of the thunder, made a confusion of sounds truly awful. When the sky began to clear a little, the rain to fall in a less torrential downpour, the *valet de chambre*, the most correct of Parisian servants, noiselessly entered the dining-room where we were gathered, and gave us the alarming news that the lightning had struck the laundry at the foot of the hill, and that one of the laundresses was still in the building.

The Countess, who was as brave as a lion, at once left her place at table, and, taking a wrap from a stand

in the hall on her way, was down the hill before any-one realized the import of her movements. As quickly as I could collect my senses, I followed. The rain was still coming down heavily, and the drive was a veritable river. My thin slippers sank into the mud over their tops, my hair collected the falling rain, which it poured again down my face and over my shoulders. The Countess flitted ahead of me like a water sprite, so swiftly did she go. When we arrived at the laundry, though we found no fire, the laundress lay in a huddled heap, limp, black and unconscious. The laundry was, of course, a wreck. The poor woman was carried tenderly to the Castle, and there every effort was put forth to save her, but while she breathed, she was totally deaf, blind and paralysed. Eventually she recovered her faculties, but died in a few months. I saw many storms in Hungary, but never again one to equal this.

Hungary is a fertile land ; much wheat is grown and is sold direct from the cornfield to Englishmen for the English market. I once saw an immense heap of corn lying on tarpaulin sheets ; it was sold on the field and was taken to the train for Fiume, from whence it was transported by sea to England. The agricultural implements are of the best and newest, and the wheat is thrashed straight from the sheaves ; it is never taken into barns. How I enjoyed the fruit, which is of splendid quality ! I used to go into the orchards and pick what peaches and grapes I liked ; the cherries also were particularly large and

sweet. Even the fruits round Florence, that paradise of fruit, were not better than those of Csurgó. As to the vegetables, they have a way of growing them in long underground tunnels built of brick. I have known a constant supply of asparagus grown in this way.

The estate of Csurgó was, I think, the most beautiful and perfectly laid-out of any I have ever seen. A pretty lake with an island was an attractive feature, and as the fishing was good I enjoyed many an afternoon of this placid sport, until one day a black viper glided quickly over my foot and disappeared. It had no intention of hurting me and no doubt was quite as frightened as I was, but I felt that the island was not large enough to contain us both, so I gave up fishing. Reptiles seem to be particularly venomous in Hungary.

A small artificial hill had been made for the reservoir that supplied the estate with water. This water was filtered through several different basins until it attained great purity, but in the outer basins were many toads, which hopped about and basked upon the stones above the water in the sun. The children used to amuse themselves driving them off the stones into the water. Always delicate, these children fell ill, and the doctor declared they had been poisoned by the toads!

During those hot August days nothing could have been more refreshing than the mineral spring baths in which we indulged. All over Hungary mineral



THE COUNTESS KAROLYI WITH HER CHILDREN.

springs abound, their various properties being highly regarded by the medical profession. At Csurgó was a particularly delightful one, rich in mineral qualities. It came up bubbling and sparkling like champagne, always pleasantly warm and most invigorating. It was a large, round piece of water enclosed in a brick embankment with a wide path, on which were seats and also cabins for dressing. At short intervals there were flights of steps leading down to the water. It was too far a walk from the house, so we used to drive over and have lunch in our bath. There were large circles of wood with holes in them, like life-belts floating about, and we would get into these, and supported by our arms, we would stay there for hours at a time. Some parts of this wonderful bath were shallow, but where the springs rose it was very deep.

Many were the excursions I went with the Countess, and when she suggested a few days at Lake Balaton, needless to say, I was delighted. Probably the least known of the inland waters of Europe, I regret to say that my expectations of its beauty were far from realized. It is very large, but being so narrow it is not the imposing piece of water one anticipated. Further, the country about is rather uninteresting. There are hills, to be sure, and perhaps it may be the extremely enervating air which dissipated all the enthusiasm with which I had looked forward to seeing it. We arrived at the station of Balaton Füred about midday on the hottest day I can ever

remember. Like almost all watering-places, there is the exclusive element and the trippery. The rendezvous of the first lay across the water, so in the dazzling sun we boarded the little steamer which plies between the two places. There was quite a ground swell, but no fresh sea breeze to counteract its effect. The reflection from the sun upon the water gave us the most dreadful headaches. Once across the lake we found all society seated at a long table in the open air, enjoying lunch. The sight of food was quite sufficient for me! After lunch we went on Count Esterhazy's yacht, and the sail was by far our most pleasant experience that day. Lake Balaton is slowly drying up, although the springs are very visible in the water. In some places there are marshy bogs extending far into the country, and as there is no watershed these marshes absorb the rainfall.

I was glad to leave the next day, and I firmly believe that a week of Balaton, with its heat and stagnant air, would have made me ill. Not many miles from the lake lived the noble family of Doëyi, and there I went to spend a few days. It was a magnificent estate, with splendid horses and cattle, and for the breeding of the former it was famous. While I was staying there, they sold four horses to the Emperor of Russia, and I was interested to know that these fine animals were placed in padded boxes and during the entire journey to St. Petersburg, of some five days' duration, given no food whatever, only drink, and I was told they reached their



THE CHILDREN OF BARON DOËVY.

destination in excellent condition, only slightly exhausted.

An exciting and most amusing incident of official inefficiency occurred during my visit. Upon the estate was a large dairy, some hundreds of cows supplying the milk. At this time there was a tuberculosis scare, and the Government sent an inspector from Buda-Pest. His methods certainly were original, if not absolutely unique. The cows were ordered into a large field, and each in turn prodded into a violent gallop for some few minutes. If the poor creature, at the end of the specified time, became short of breath, she was condemned and led away to be slaughtered, as the conclusion was that only a tubercular animal should pant after a mad gallop of half a mile. The Baron Doëyi, returning that same day quite unexpectedly, found a large proportion of his cattle under sentence of death, and a fair chance of the entire herd being exterminated. Needless to add, he had considerable conversation with the Government over the matter.

The peasants were, as always, a source of interest to me. They are such a splendid people, so handsome and bold, and, although any work is seldom paid in money, they are as a rule prosperous. The landowner gives them a cottage and so much acreage, for which each man, woman and child above a certain age must give so many days' work in return. Their labours are varied. One particularly profitable industry is the picking, drying and sacking of lime

flowers, which are sent to the Baltic provinces to be used as tea ! On each estate all the feathers of game and fowls are saved carefully, and once a year the women meet in a large shed with a long table down the centre. On this table, by degrees, are piled the feathers ; a sack with open mouth is fixed beside each woman, and every feather, no matter how small, is stripped from the quill and thus these sacks are filled with the softest down, which fetches a good price all over Europe.

The women are industrious and also very handsome. To see them in their gala dress, the bright colours showing off their dark eyes and fine complexions, and the bell-like figures, made by the many petticoats all stiffly starched which stand out like a ballet dancer's (one can count the edges in the rows of lace), swinging gracefully along, beside a magnificent masculine specimen in tight black clothes, covered with silver buttons, much as a pearly king of Covent Garden fame, is a pleasurable sight and one that lingers in the memory.

In September I went with the Countess to visit her mother-in-law, the famous Countess Karolyi, who is said to have cursed the Emperor Franz Josef shortly after his accession to the throne of Austria-Hungary when, by his order, the Count, her son, was shot in Buda-Pest. That she was a grief-stricken woman was plain to the most casual observer, and although very old when I was at Sásvar, she still showed plainly her strong and forceful character. The

troubles she had undergone were enough to have put a woman of ordinary mentality either in a madhouse or under the sod. She was a devoted patriot, and had reaped her reward by banishment for twenty years from the country she loved so well. The Count, her husband, had been held a prisoner by the Austrians and confined in two small rooms in a fortress near Vienna, and the Karolyi Palace in Buda-Pest, one of the most gorgeous private palaces in Europe, was taken possession of by the Austrians as head-quarters for the Staff. When the terms of peace had been signed, the Count was permitted to return to Hungary, but as if the life of his son was not a sufficient price he was confronted with a bill of most exorbitant proportions, for the lodgings which he had occupied in Austria. This he at once paid, making no demur whatever, whereupon the Government loftily inquired what emoluments he would ask in return for the use of the Palace in University Street, Buda-Pest. Smilingly the Count replied: "Were I to charge according to the scale you have demanded of me in proportion to the accommodation, the Austrian Treasury would be bankrupt."

Sásvar was a small house, compared with the other homes of the Karolyis, but it was extremely pretty, being an excellent copy of a seventeenth-century French château. The old Countess was an exquisite needlewoman, and in these days much of her time was spent in doing the most lovely embroidery. She would go into the garden and choose some sprays

of fine roses, then copy them in the finest stitches with beautifully shaded silks, and so perfectly that they looked like first-rate painting.

It was here that I saw my first vintage, this being the famous Tokai district, adjoining the estates of the Emperor, and it is here that the grapes which make the real Tokai, wine like imprisoned sunshine, are grown. I had looked forward to the experience with considerable pleasure, always picturing to myself a brilliantly warm day, a wealth of colour from the peasants' costumes and the heaps of fruit. I thought wine was made with laughter and song. Quite otherwise it proved. A cold, grey and wet day; the men and women strode past us with baskets strapped to their backs, only half full of grapes. They all looked sullen, and anything but the joyous creatures my fancy had painted. Not a snatch of song gladdened the air; not a ray of sunshine lightened the clouds; and the long procession of labourers plodded by, entering a dark, damp-looking shed where they left their grapes to be trodden into that glorious golden nectar which has made joyous many a feast.

Hungarian wine is supposed to be largely doctored with chemicals, at least that is the common belief, and an amusing tale is told of a rich landowner who, when dying, wished to impart the secrets of his business to his sons. Having given minute instructions as to the quantities and the qualities of the chemicals used, and almost exhausted with his efforts,

he murmured, "And lastly remember, my sons, wine can also be made of grapes."

One day, upon looking out of my window, I saw what I took to be dark clouds of most extraordinary shapes moving rapidly, and changing as though driven by a wind of great velocity. In an incredibly short time these clouds disappeared, apparently dropping to the earth. In a few minutes, more of them appeared upon the horizon, and I called the children to come and see. Immediately they cried out, "The birds, the birds." Then I was told how the migrating birds from all northern Europe pass over Hungary. They come in almost incredible numbers, some rest for a night and a day in the small woods and copses, which are easier to alight in than the great forests. The best game bird which is shot *en passant* is the woodcock. As a rule they stay only twenty-four hours, arriving at sunset. At dawn they begin their search for food, and then the woods seem full of them. After the sun rises they are quiet all day and leave to pursue their journey at even.

It is the custom in Hungary for the sportsman to take from every woodcock shot one feather for his hat. Thus by the end of the season some hats are surrounded by an upstanding wreath of these feathers; but woe betide the luckless owner of a featherless hat, for upon the first of the April following he will receive a herring's head to decorate the hapless hat. Needless to say I have never seen one

worn, and I doubt whether anyone else has either. At Csurgó many notable guests have been entertained for the shooting. The late King Edward VII. of England when Prince of Wales was a guest there, and a most popular one at that. One of the proud possessions of the Countess Karolyi is a silver inkstand presented by him. (It is in the shape of a horse-shoe.)

Truffles are found in great abundance and of perfect shape in the woods about Csurgó. The chef, a Frenchman who had been many years in the service of the Karolyis, used them with a prodigal hand.

One day the Countess told him it was needless to use them so profusely as the children did not like them. With perfect respect and great seriousness, he replied :

“ But, Madame, young Countesses must learn to like truffles.”

As upon many large estates, the Karolyis had at Csurgó allotted a piece of ground in one of the woods to the gipsies. Here around the Tribal Tree the band lived happily. They were married and given in marriage, settled disputes, and the head of the tribe passed judgment, all under this fine tree. A picturesque band they were, and their talent for music marvellous. They play entirely by ear. When they are playing there is no fixed programme. The leader strikes a few notes of the melody, solo, then, recognizing the theme, each takes up his part with marvellous skill and a feeling impossible of expression by a less imaginative or less passionate tempera-

ment. It is music which stirs one to the very soul, and searches out one's innermost heartaches. As a people, these gipsies are like astonishingly simple yet amazingly shrewd children. Their passions or their sympathies are aroused with an equal degree of intensity.

Count Michael Karolyi and I spent one hot afternoon teaching this particular band the airs from H.M.S. *Pinafore*. By tea-time they knew them all, and could Sir Arthur Sullivan have heard his music with the weird minor accompaniments they improvised for it, his soul would have been filled with joy, for it was surpassingly beautiful. One of the gipsies interested me greatly. He was an extremely wiry, thin man of about forty, a lock of his jet black hair was brought down over his forehead and a bunch of flowers fastened in it. I inquired the reason of this most unusual and striking decoration, and was told that it was an indication of his desire to marry, and that he was collecting the price of a wife. As he was a widower and not very attractive the price was high. Marriage is always by purchase; the girl is bought from her father and brothers, and woe betide the girl who wants to marry anyone who is not a gipsy. Still worse betide the father who wants to sell her to someone not of the tribe.

We all helped a little, and told him when he was married that he must bring his wife to see us after the wedding. This wife to be, he said, with an ecstatic roll of his dark eyes, was a beautiful girl.

One afternoon, about a week later, we saw two figures approaching the Castle. They looked more like animated scarecrows than anything else. Lo and behold, it was he of the flower-trimmed lock and his so beautiful bride! But a more unbridal-like pair it would be difficult to imagine. The poor man had paid the father the price demanded for his daughter, but her brothers thought it too little, so they had cut off her hair and taken away her clothes. She wore only a very ragged old skirt and a coat of her husband's, and her straight black hair stood out from her head in uneven tufts. She was indeed a most unhappy-looking bride, and they made the drollest of couples. We soon found her a more becoming trousseau and she turned out to be really a nice-looking girl. I can only trust that her husband repaid her sufferings with the devotion they deserved.

CHAPTER XI

AS the winter came on, the weather grew insufferably cold. The snow mounted above the hedges, and when we drove out the sleighs went as the crow flies, over fences, hedges and so forth. I had been four months with the Karolyis, but I realized one cannot visit for ever, and I felt that the place I should like to be in above all others was the Eternal City. His Excellency, Monsieur Merry del Val, had been appointed Ambassador from Spain to Rome, and my acquaintance with Madame Merry del Val had ripened, through a correspondence, into a warm friendship. I had expressed a desire to secure a post in Rome, and she wrote :

“ We enjoy Rome immensely. Such moments as those we spend in hearing the H. Father’s Mass and then in his audience chamber are not to be forgotten. I have not, I regret to say, much hope of placing you in a family in Rome. I have already inquired, and was always told that nearly all the best families are ruined, and are sending away

governesses and tutors so as to economize. And last autumn I tried in Spain to hear of something, with no better success. Just while I write it occurs to me whether you would like to stay in a convent in Rome for the winter months, when you would very likely find some little occupation."

Indeed, this was exactly what I would like, particularly as at that time I was firmly convinced that I had a vocation, and would eventually become a nun. I hastened to reply to Madame Merry del Val to that effect. However, in a short time I was put into correspondence with the Countess Antonelli of Ceccano, who engaged me as English governess to her daughters. I was to enter upon my new duties on the first of January. I immediately wrote to Madame Merry del Val, and she replied :

December 16th.

"If you come to Italy, please let me know in good time the day and hour of your arrival in Rome. I should like, if you please, to get you lodged somewhere comfortably for a night before going on to Ceccano."

Ceccano is a small medieval town perched upon the summit of one point of the Apennines between Rome and Naples, quite cut off from the plains beneath ; the road from the station to the town winds up the mountain side, steep and narrow. It

was an unusually cold winter in 1895, and when I was all packed and ready to leave Csurgó, I received a card from (my good friend.)

not too

Rome, January 10th.

Good -

“Weather very bad here. I strongly advise putting off your journey for a week later than you propose. Countess A. will quite see the reason and (I believe) will be better pleased. For your beginning at Ceccano would be in unfavourable circumstances just now. There is snow in the country round Rome.

“J. M. DEL V.”

As this was my first visit to Rome, I was full of joyous anticipation which was realized entirely. I arrived the 18th of January and the weather was superb. Madame Merry del Val had arranged that I should stay a few days in a convent in the San Sebastianello, where I was most happy and comfortable. To really secure the proper mental atmosphere with which to enjoy Rome one must stay either in a convent or a palace. I wrote to my mother of this momentous visit :

“DEAREST VER,

“Thanks for your two letters ; the second I received here sent on from Csurgó. Now I am here for only a day or two and then leave for Ceccano. I am in an English convent as visitor for a week. The weather to-day is perfect, not too hot, but

certainly not cold. I am writing with two windows open to the ground, and a glorious sun. To-morrow I lunch with the Spanish Ambassadors, who would like to take me about and show me Rome. Perhaps you will understand that when visiting churches and picture galleries I prefer to do it by myself; one feels so much freer, and everything is so familiar, what with photographs and copies.

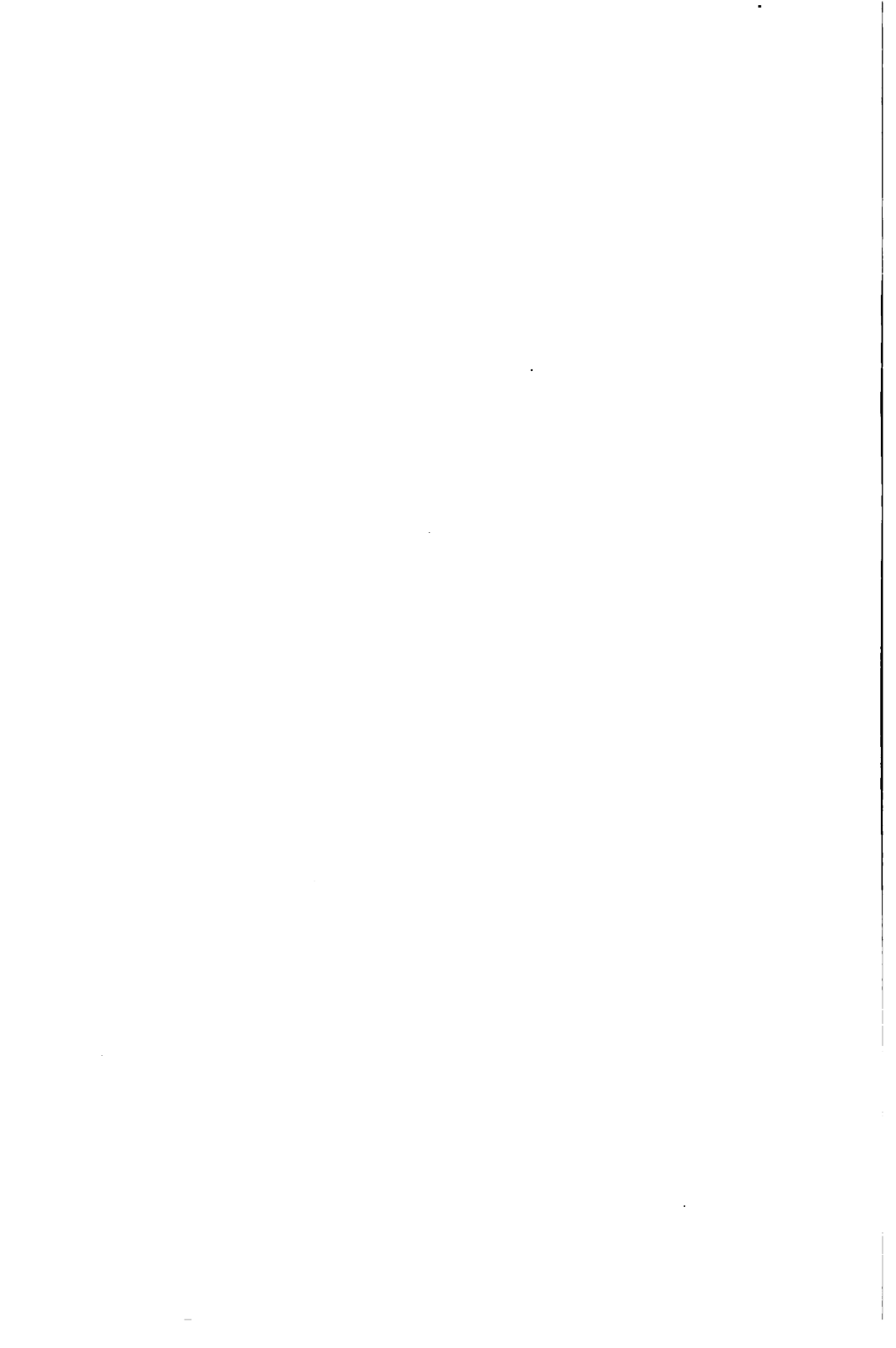
"This morning I gave to the church of St. Peter. I went all through with a guide book, and then a clever German priest noticed me, and finding I understood German (although English) he went all through it again, and I was delighted. I went on the roof round the cupola. The weather and view were beyond all description.

"This afternoon I go to the dentist!"

Those few days in Rome I count amongst my happiest memories, excepting those visits to the dentist! The journey to Ceccano was a pleasant one, the drive up the mountain to the village was charming, as the views were so delightful. On the way we passed several macaroni factories, the flat roofs of which are utilized for drying the macaroni, which is hung out on bars, for all the world like a washing. The little village, perched high upon the mountain side, is most picturesque, with an ancient castle of the Colonnas, for the most part in ruins. The portion still intact is used upon occasions as a prison. The Casa Antonelli, whither I was bound,



MADAME MERRY DEL VAL, TAKEN IN THE SPANISH EMBASSY, ROME.



was an imposing house facing a square or piazza, round which the village was built. The house was by far and away the most uncomfortable I have ever stayed in ; but the view from the little balcony outside my window was magnificent, and I never tired of watching the ever changing shades and shadows of the snow-tipped mountains, rising abruptly from the warm valley beneath. By moonlight it was so beautiful as to seem unreal. However, one cannot live on a view and I was not contented here. There are some people whom it is impossible to get on with, no matter how hard one may try. The Countess Antonelli was one of these.

“ *April 9th, 1895.*

“ DEAREST VER,

“ I am going to spend Easter at the Spanish Embassy. Rather grand, am I not, especially as it is by invitation, as guest ? But the Antonellis very coolly gave me to understand my room was preferable to my company for Easter. I was very anxious to know where to go and wrote to Madame Merry del Val, who immediately invited me. But what a *nice* family to be with who give you unasked-for holidays in a foreign land ! I hope to do some good in Rome when I get away from this horrid place.

“ To-day we have been for a long walk, and I picked a bunch of lovely wild cyclamen, a rich red. There are quantities of them now taking the place of the anemones.”

Well do I recall that lovely Italian springtime. I left Ceccano on a Saturday morning for my Easter visit in Rome. It was a disagreeably wet morning, and I had to go by post-carriage from Ceccano to the station at the bottom of the hill. The train for Rome passed through the station at 4.30 a.m., and that Friday night I scarcely slept an hour, so afraid was I that I should miss the post-carriage. Owing, I presume, to my anxiety, my watch misled me, and I rose and dressed, to find myself in the empty piazza at three o'clock. It was quite dark; and not a chaise could I make out, nor did I know where the stables were. In desperation I began calling, "Antonio, Antonio!" my voice echoing through the sleeping town at that early hour. But, alas, it was not the only sound that echoed, for I had wakened the population along with Antonio, and right glad I was when the chaise rumbled over the cobbles and I escaped from the heated remarks my disturbance had evoked.

"Casa Antonelli,

"Ceccano, Italy.

"*April 25th, 1895.*

"MY DEAREST VER,

"I had a lovely time at the Embassy during Easter. I stayed from Saturday till Thursday. I went to St. Peter's for Easter Day Mass and to the Pope on Wednesday. Leo XIII. struck me as exceedingly fragile and of a wonderfully transparent



ANTICAMERA PONTIFICIA

Biglietto d'ammissione alla Sala Ducale per assistere (senza fare la Santa Comunione) alla Messa di Sua Santità il giorno 17 Aprile 1895 alle ore 8 ant.

IL MAESTRO DI CAMERA DI SUA SANTITÀ
O. CAGIANO DE AZEVEDO

N. B. — Le Signore saranno in abito nero e velo in testa: i Signori in frac e cravatta bianca.
Questo biglietto dovrà esibirsi spiegato ad ogni richiesta.
L'ingresso sarà dal Portone di Bronzo, Scala Regia.

Il Biglietto è personale.

TICKET OF ADMISSION TO A CELEBRATION OF THE MASS BY THE POPE.

complexion. He seemed very tired. He was not genial; he was condescending, and perhaps for this reason he made a great impression on me. They called him Papa-Ré when shouting for him, but he looked much more King (Ré) than Father (Papa).

"It would take too long to tell you of all the kindness of the Merry del Vals. I was never so spoilt. We quite decided while I was in Rome that I am not to stay here, and I have heard of a splendid engagement which they are all trying hard to get for me. With such friends as mine it is only a question of time and patience: I need the patience, for I have suffered here. I had my photo taken in Rome. I have not seen the proof yet, but you shall have a copy, even if it is not very good. I am afraid you will quite forget what my face is like."

" April 24th, 1895.

"DEAR MISS —,

"My mother, who is so busy, wishes me to write and tell you that your photo came and she sent it directly to Mère Frida. My mother says that the photo is good, but that you look rather serious. We hope that you will not be kept long without knowing something, and believe me to be,

"Yours affectionately,

"MARIA MERRY DEL VAL.

"To Miss —,

"Casa Antonelli, Ceccano."

“ Casa Antonelli,

“ Ceccano, Italy.

“ *April 28th*, 1895.

“ DEAREST VER,

“ You will be pleased to hear that I am appointed English governess to the Archduchess Elizabeth Marie, the only child of the late Archduke Rudolph, and granddaughter to the Emperor of Austria. I am delighted, as I always told you I meant to be in a Royal Family. The engagement does not begin until next September, and as I leave here May 15th, I don't quite know what to do in between. I have heaps of letters to write, so fondest love,

“ From

“ M.”

The joy of my appointment was only equalled by my pleasure at leaving Ceccano. Through my kind friends, the Merry del Vals, I stayed in a convent and got some pupils in English for a few hours each day.

No family could have been kinder to me than the Merry del Vals. His Excellency, Monsieur Merry del Val, was descended from an Irish family named Merry, who settled in Spain during some time of Catholic persecution in Ireland. Del Val was his mother's name, which he adopted in conjunction with his own. Madame Merry del Val was born in England, her father, the Marquis del Torre Diaz having married a Miss Wilcox. Both Monsieur and

Madame Merry del Val had a sincere love for England, and their children were all born in this country. Monsieur was recalled to the Spanish Court at the accession of Alphonso XII., and held important diplomatic positions until his retirement in 1900. They were, of course, traditionally strict Catholics, and thoroughly Spanish. Madame Merry del Val, though not tall, was excessively dignified, but her graciousness of manner and the lovely expression of her beautiful eyes won all hearts. Her religion, the duties of her position, and her sons absorbed all her time in Rome, though she invariably found time to be kind to me. The Ambassador was always occupied with the claims of his office: visiting the Vatican, receiving distinguished Spanish visitors, as well as making and keeping diplomatic engagements, gave him small leisure. His kindness to me has left an indelible memory.

“ Saturday, 21st.

“ DEAR MISS M.,

“ This is the reliquary which my brother likes and thinks fit for the relic. I put it inside this note, and I’m sorry not to be able to give it to you in person.

“ Hoping to see you soon,

“ I remain, with much love,

“ Yours affectionately,

“ MARIA.”

Later :

“ DEAR MISS M.,

“ My mother will be so very glad if you will come to lunch with us to-morrow at twelve o'clock. I gave our porter the reliquaries, and hope that you have got them.

“ With much love,

“ I remain,

“ Yours affectionately,

“ MARIA.

“ On what point shall we quarrel ? ? ? ”

This reliquary was a holy picture, with a tiny case behind it that was to contain a precious relic which had been promised to me.

“ *June 17th.*

“ DEAR M.,

“ I am so glad about the Marchesa Malvezzi.

“ We hope you will drive over some day early in next week to meet my son.

“ Yours affectionately,

“ J. M. DEL V.

“ I shall, of course, be pleased to see you whenever you come to me.”

The appointment as companion governess to the two daughters of the Marchesa Malvezzi for the time

intervening before I entered upon my duties at the Austrian Court was a pleasant surprise to me, for I had expected to stay at the convent until September. Rome is very hot and unhealthy in midsummer, and this engagement was to take me to the sea with delightful people, so I was indeed happy over it. As always, I was sorry to leave the convent and Rome, but I welcomed the change. On the last day of June, I went to the Convent Raparatrici to make a retreat, and on July 9th, I left to take up my duties with the Malvezzi in Bellaria.

Diary :

July 9th.

End of retreat. Talked at breakfast before my last meditation. Just like me, and I meant to keep silence as a mortification ! Mother Superior's fête, St. Veronica ; a lay sister received the Habit. Monseigneur Merry del Val said Mass. I leave Rome at 10.30 p.m. for Bellaria. Very sorry to go from Rome.

July 10th.

Bellaria. Arrived here at 8.30 a.m. and was very kindly received. Passed a quiet day. This is a small seaside place with villas right at the edge of the sea. This villa is just between the station and the sea, with a little uncultivated garden. There are only straggling small green plants in it, such as will grow in sand. There is a little chapel near, simple

but nicely kept. The Marchesa is very gentle and kind ; the three sons are simple and polite, and my two pupils seem sweet girls. There is a priest staying here ; this is agreeable. The house is quite plain, as everything gets spoilt near the sea, but I have all I can possibly want. The girls work, study English and painting with me. They may begin singing later, perhaps.

July 13th.

Stormy weather. The sea is lovely. Letter from Madame Merry del Val from Lourdes :

“ Lourdes,

“ Assumption Convent.

“ *July 9th.*

“ DEAR M.,

“ I must send you a line as I sit by my window, whence I can see the statue of Our Lady in the Grotto and the numerous pilgrims kneeling at her feet. I was there this morning at Mass and Holy Communion, and I have several times prayed ‘ my best ’ for you. I wish you were in this most consoling atmosphere of faith and love. But you have had a retreat, and that is a more solid good. Still, if you ever get a chance, mind you come to Lourdes.

“ Maria has been rather knocked up by our hot, tiring journey. I am always better for change and the rest from ordinary cares, and so I bore it better



Photo by Montabone, Florence.

DONNA CECILIA AND DONNA MARIA MALVEZZI.

than my strong young woman. We got here on Saturday and are leaving to-day.

"I think we shall sleep at Bayonne, going on to-morrow morning to San Sebastian, a journey of very short duration. So the worst is over. Do write and tell me all about yourself. I so often think of you, dear.

"Give my affectionate souvenir to the Marchesa and her daughters. Tell them that I thought of them at Lourdes.

"Your ever affectionate,

"J. MERRY DEL VAL.

"P.S.—There were miracles here last week; and an unbeliever, who had been mocking a poor paralytic woman, saw her throw away her crutches and walk. This was when the B. Sacrament was carried in Procession. He was converted and went to confession.

"J. M. D. V."

July 28th.

Went early to Mass and Communion. In the afternoon went to Rimini. A very pleasant time with M. Antonio, Charles, Cecilia and Mary. We visited the church with the Miraculous Madonna, whose eyes looked down in love at a broken-hearted woman whose husband had been drowned at sea. The eyes are generally turned to heaven, but were seen to move by many people.

Saw the place where St. Anthony preached to the

fishes, and made the little ass kneel to the S. Sacrament. Then we went to see the Palace and Church of the Mala Testiana, where Francesca da Rimini was married. Francesca da Rimini married one brother, Malatesia, and loved the other, Paolo. The husband killed both together, and Dante in the "Inferno" sees the lovers floating about together. This was most interesting. The Roneau Arch and Bridge and the spot where Julius Cæsar harangued the troops after crossing the Rubicon. Went to the Casino and heard some good music and returned at 9.30 p.m. Not a bad afternoon's sight-seeing. I don't believe an American tourist could have done more than that.

August 5th.

We left Bellaria and arrived, after a tiring and dusty journey, at Bagnarolla. I had a bad headache and went to bed. Travelled by Ravenna and there saw the church, the cathedral, and Theodoric's tomb.

" August 13th, 1895.

" MY DEAR A.,

" Thanks very much for your letter. I send this to Cornwall; heaven only knows where you are at present. I hope you like living in your boxes better than I do. I do so dislike going from place to place and not having my things round me. Now, a box with my treasures is at the Spanish Embassy

in Rome and I have not plunged to the bottom of my box here. I shall be very glad to be in Vienna. The heat here, now we have left the sea, is insupportable, and I am not able to bear it very well. I feel ill and feverish. I experienced my first earthquake shock last Wednesday. We were all sitting in the drawing-room after dinner when suddenly everyone jumped up and began shrieking. I did not notice the room move, but I felt sick and dizzy. They were all dreadfully frightened as seldom there is only one shock, but we have felt nothing since, though we have dreadful lightning all night, and the weather is hot and oppressive. I was not frightened, but I think it was the courage of ignorance. Italy is a nasty, dangerous place. You should see how we barricade ourselves up at night! This house is nicely old and I should say haunted, but these things, I think, concern the family more than a poor foreigner.

“The Malvezzi-Campeggi family are of a noble house of Bologna. Cardinal Campeggi was an ancestor of this family. He was a widower with two sons when he entered the Church, and it was from one of these sons that this family is descended. The Cardinal was sent on a mission by Pope Clement VII. to Henry VIII., to arrange the King’s separation from Catherine of Arragon. Campeggi took the view that the Queen might retire into a convent, and leave the King free. Henry was so delighted with this diplomacy, which fitted so well with his own desires, that he gave the Cardinal the rich see of

Salisbury, much valuable furniture and a set of tapestries, duplicates of some at Hampton Court. But this advice proved so unpopular with the Queen, and with all Spain, that the Cardinal was obliged to retract the proposal and left England hurriedly to escape the King's wrath. However, the tapestries were by that time safely *en route* to Bologna, where they have hung in the Malvezzi Palace for all these centuries.

"Now I am sitting right away from everybody, by the light of one dim candle. The girls are timid to the last degree, and will never stay a moment alone in the evening. They say the family portraits make faces at them, so they rush along the galleries. Good-bye for the present. I expect to leave here on the 25th.

"With best love,

"M."

August 9th.

Spent the day at Bologna. Got up at five a.m., left the house at six. Half an hour in the carriage, and half an hour in the train. Confession and Communion at once. Then to the Palazzo for coffee. After which shopping and lunch. In the afternoon, I visited the churches of St. Petronia, St. Francis and St. Katherine. There I was admitted to see the Saint and kiss her hands. She is one of the saints who, when canonized, was taken from her tomb, a mummy, and dressed. In a tiny chapel behind the

altar, and carefully locked and hidden from the general public, she sits upon a chair behind a low rail, and so near do the favoured few who are admitted approach her, that it is possible to kiss her little black hand, which lies upon her knee. How the body is fastened I do not know, but the position is natural, and only the dreadful black little face brings reality home to one. She is guarded, day and night, by nuns who are strictly enclosed and never seen, but there are holes in the walls through which you can feel the watchers' eyes marking your attitude towards their adored Saint. I also went to St. Dominico and saw his tomb guarded upon one side by Michael Angelo's beautiful angel. Saw the two leaning towers, the Tower Asinelli and Tower Garisenda. The latter is one of the few "leaning towers" whose obliquity was intentional. I also saw the Malvezzi-Campeggi Palace—a splendid place!

August 27th.

Left Italy. Very sad at parting. As far as Venice the journey very pleasant; Venice beautiful; but after that I was sick and ill the whole time. So awfully hot. Beautiful scenery in North Italy. Luggage examined in Pontanfel; no trouble.

August 28th.

Arrived in Vienna in the morning. In afternoon went to Mother Frida (Sacred Heart Convent). It was through the convent I was appointed to the

Archduchess. Took rooms in Pension Schopf ; seems nice and comfortable.

August 30th.

Went to Confession. Father Lasuma was very kind and counselled *prudence*.

August 31st.

Met the Countess Coudenrove at the Sacred Heart Convent. She took me with her to the town. We talked a little, and then she (put me down) and I walked home.

CHAPTER XII

AT nine-thirty on the morning of September 1st, 1895, I left Vienna for Laxenburg. It was a warm, bright, beautiful morning, and I travelled in a carriage especially set apart for members of the Royal suites. The railway is only a short branch line with the terminus at Laxenburg, and was built for the convenience of the people connected with the Court. The Royal Family rarely use it, as there is a fine road to Vienna and the drive is only of an hour's duration.

The Countess Coudenhove, who had all arrangements for the Archduchess's suite in her hands, met me at the station. I found the Castle the most lovely I had ever seen. I was at once shown my apartments, where the Countess left me, but she had no sooner gone than Madame Touzet sent for me. Madame was in reality the doyen of the suite, but was too old to fulfil all her duties. She had been governess to the Archduchess Valerie, the youngest child of the Emperor, and had been faithful in her service, but now she was merely a figurehead, the Countess explained. She was most kind and pleasant to me upon my introduction to her.

After this interview I returned to my rooms, and was soon again fetched by Madame to be introduced to the little Archduchess, who was playing in her garden with her cousin, the Princess Dora of Coburg, who is about two years her senior. This garden is one of the prettiest spots in Laxenburg. About an acre and a half has been carefully and artistically laid out; water runs on two sides. There are rustic bridges, and in one place a busy mill, the water turning the wheel. Cages of birds, a gazelle, rabbits, guinea-pigs and some rare ducks made a small menagerie. A rustic summer-house completes a picture almost equal to the Petit Trianon.

We saw the little Archduchess walking with her cousin. She was tall, slight and fair, an extremely pretty girl, years younger than her age. She had on a white muslin dress, sprigged with light blue flowers, and looked thoroughly in harmony with her rural surroundings. She was most dignified—if rather shy—and responded to my curtsy with quite a queenly air. I was unfortunate in succeeding a governess whom she thoroughly disliked and judged all English by her standards; therefore it was only natural that she should not be favourably inclined towards any of my countrywomen. We walked about, and she showed me her animals and birds. Her love for dumb things was most extraordinary. Her grandmother, the Empress Elizabeth, was known to have a marvellous influence over all animals. On one occasion her life was saved by this wonderful,

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THE BRIDGE WHERE THE ACCIDENT TO THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH OCCURRED.

almost hypnotic power. She was riding, and, when crossing a small bridge over a deep chasm in the mountains of Styria, the horse's hind legs went through the planks. The Empress's habit was caught, so that both horse and rider were prisoners, but so marvellous was her control that for three hours, perhaps longer, she succeeded in keeping the spirited creature quite quiet until her suite found and extricated them. It is almost unbelievable, but quite true. I presume that the Archduchess inherited a measure of that marked affection without the strange mesmeric power.

After we had talked for a little, I went to dine with Madame, as the doyen was always called. At the Austrian Court dinner is at midday, except on state occasions. During the meal, the little Archduchess, Princess Dora and the Countess Coudenhove came in, most informally. By now the Archduchess had recovered from her first shyness and (criticized my hat) with great frankness.

We then had a game of tennis and went for a drive. We got down at the lake, where we took a boat and the children rowed. The Archduchess was in great spirits and splashed water over us all. I concluded that one of my duties was to sit still and look pleasant while I was being drenched. The kind of humour which consists in making people thoroughly wet and uncomfortable for one's amusement seems to be a brand peculiar to Eastern Europe—that is as regards the upper sections of society! However,

she soon grew tired of this performance, so I did not mind very much.

After our return we had tea, and they all came part way to the station with me, as I returned to Vienna for the night. The first day was ended. I was thoroughly tired, but nothing discouraged. The next morning I packed up my things and came to Laxenburg.

“Château Impérial,

“Laxenburg, bei Wien,

“Austria.

“MY DEAREST MOTHER,

“I am here at last! Yesterday I spent the day here and played tennis with the Archduchess; went in the carriage with her, and in a boat on the lake, and she rowed, and I had tea with her. She seems a nice little girl, very pleasant. Her cousin, about her own age, a Princess of Coburg, is also here.

“I have a beautiful apartment just under hers, a drawing-room, bedroom and kitchen. I have a maid to myself; otherwise I am quite alone. The Palace is magnificent, and I think I shall be very comfortable. My first lesson is to-morrow afternoon. I am unpacked and have arranged my things. This is my first letter written in the Palace. I am very tired and only write to send the address.

“Best love, dearest Ver,

“From

September 2nd.

“M.”

The morning of the 3rd dawned bright and clear, and I was up betimes and in the chapel for early Mass.

After my breakfast the Countess sent for me and we had a chat. I must say she gave me a most confused account of my duties, and it made me rather anxious. The Schlosshauptmann called upon me and I received my first month's salary—only two hundred gulden: truly 'tis more glory than gold one earns by serving Royalty.

In the afternoon I had my first lesson with the Archduchess for about an hour. Then she left me to go to her mother, the Archduchess Stephanie. Presently she returned saying that her mother had sent her to fetch me. I found the Crown Princess, whom I confess I regarded with considerable curiosity, most kind and gracious towards me. She was at that time a beautiful woman, with a peach-like complexion and abundant fair hair. The one defect in her beauty was the pale eyes and lashes. She spoke most kindly to me, admired my English very much, and said she would herself have lessons and she wished her daughter to speak like me.

After all this, I made a curtsy—under the severe eye of my pupil, the Archduchess—and she carried me off upstairs to her rooms to show me her treasures, and I played for some time with her. Later Madame fetched me to pay some calls. Although under one roof, there was a great amount of formality observed, and we received and paid our visits

to one another exactly as if we were three miles apart.

My rooms were on the ground floor looking out into the lovely gardens, and I had many visits of an informal character at that window. Many a choice morsel of Court gossip floated over that sill, for I found the Austrian Court the most critical and scandalmongering of any Court in Europe. Although the proudest and stiffest and with the longest lineages, the courtiers have the least regard for the Royal family. When I ventured upon a few occasions to point out that without Royalty there could be no aristocracy, I was regarded with an amazed contempt. That they could ever fall from their high estate was unthinkable to Austrians.

The Archduchess was fond of running up and chatting through my window, and would often come and carry me off for a walk.

One afternoon we went into the park. It was late in September and the nights were very cold, also it had been raining for two or three days. During our walk we came across a small, very young wild cat, nearly dead of cold and hunger. The Archduchess would not leave it, so we picked it up and carried it back to the Castle.

Our tea was waiting for us, arranged, as always, quite separately on silver trays, with a beautiful silver service for each. At once the Archduchess gave the cat all her cream, saying she would take half of mine. Of course the poor little thing



LAXENBURG.



hungrily and greedily lapped it up. Then, little by little, the Archduchess gave it my cream until none was left.

This was an excellent opportunity for a moral lesson, so I told her that if she gave the cream she must herself do without it. That she must do without anything was an idea so new to her that it was fairly staggering. However, she agreed, and we gravely drank our tea, *sans* milk. When the little cat had satisfied its hunger, it arched its back and stretched itself. Then suddenly, turning on the Archduchess, the little wild creature gave her a deep scratch and ran away.

She looked ruthfully at her arm, and said :

“ It didn’t understand that I meant to be kind ! ”

“ Château Impérial,

“ Laxenburg, bei Wien,

“ Austria.

“ *September 23rd, 1895.*

“ MY DEAREST VER,

“ Thanks very much for your kind letter just received. The Count Badeni has indeed a high position, but not an enviable one, as it seems hardly likely with all the difficulties, largely due to a clashing of the different nationalities, he can be long in power, and then there is nothing else a Minister President can take that is not below his dignity ; so in reality he is near the end of his career while a comparatively young man. Of course, for the

time he is the first man after the Emperor, but when one has seen a little behind the scenes as I have these things look very different.

"Wanda wrote me a charming letter last week in which she says she hopes to see very much of me this winter in Vienna.

"The Princess Windischgrätz also wrote the same. The Prince is now second in command of all the Army and lives in Vienna. You may well ask how I can keep up with all the grandeur. At first when I came here I did not know in the least what to do, so I kissed the Archduchesses' hands and made my court curtsies as best it seemed to me. Not one of the ladies told me how to comport myself, nor showed me anything. However, it did all right, and everyone said, "*You are so natural!*" I took it all as a matter of course and as if I had been used to it all my life!!!

"The talking German is the greatest difficulty I have, but everyone says I speak very well. The Archduchess is nice, but *very* proud. We had one day in our reading lesson, 'Waste not, want not.' I tried to explain it to her, but she would not understand. Later a roll of bread fell on the floor during tea, and I was going to pick it up. She said, 'Oh, it does not matter!' So I replied, 'But, Archduchess, it is very wrong to leave bread on the floor; some poor child might be glad of it.' She looked quite frowningly at me.

"She is of the same family as poor Marie

Antoinette, and in this little Austrian Archduchess one sees displayed characteristics similar to those ascribed to that ill-fated Queen. I never understood Marie Antoinette so well before.

“ Another day she insisted upon hearing the names of all my brothers and sisters. I am sorry to say she is fondest of talking during her English lessons. She writes a most hideous handwriting. I enclose you some specimens with my corrections. Her mother always calls her ‘Erzsi,’ but her signature is Elizabeth Marie.

“ With fondest love,

“ Ever your loving,
“ M.”

Shortly after this I had an excited letter from my mother. Some one had told her that we were constantly under police surveillance and that all our letters were opened. Of course, I strongly repudiated the suggestion.

“ Château Impérial,

“ Laxenburg.

“ *October 1st, 1895.*

“ MY DEAREST VER,

“ Thanks very much for your kind letter. I do not know what you mean by being ‘really in the Palace.’ I could not be more really in the Palace than I am now. This is the largest Palace in Austria. In Vienna we live in the same Palace as the Emperor,

and it is simply *absurd* to say anyone would *dare* to open our letters. Why, we are the first people in the country and far above all police, etc. You do not know what a position this is, or you would never believe this nonsense told you about opening letters. The Emperor has every confidence in me, or I should not be here, and it is not likely anyone can interfere. Of course, you can seal your letters if you think it safer, but you must remember this is not Russia, and even there anyone personally near the Imperial family is safe. Please don't think me too emphatic, but you evidently do not appreciate my position here. I have had lately much more service with the Archduchess, as I replace other ladies.

"The sentinels all present arms and salute me when I pass ; it seems so strange. They all have cartridges, and would shoot at once if there was anything in the least suspicious.

"The other evening I had been to speak to some one in another wing of the Palace. The corridors are so immense and one seldom meets any one, and to get back to my own apartments quickly I crossed the Crown Princess's private garden, quite forgetting the sentry till I was half across. It was dark. I had not been long in the Castle and if challenged had not an idea what to say. It would never do to turn back. Just as I got up to the soldier, he gave a jerk. You may imagine how my heart beat ! But he only presented arms, and I was inside in a minute.

"I wish you would send me from the music shop at S—— "Who's that calling?" Quadrilles, "Pinafore" Quadrilles and Lancers; all sheet music, not in books. Also "My Queen Waltz." I must practise up dance music.

"With fondest love, dearest,

"Ever your loving,

"M."

"Château Impérial,

"Laxenburg.

"October 6th, 1895.

"MY DEAREST VER,

"Thanks very much for your letter just received. I am glad to tell you that I have been given an apartment in the Palace in Vienna, the first English woman who has received this honour! Here I have really a beautiful apartment, a large drawing-room, a good-sized bedroom, and a kitchen the same size as the bedroom. In the 'Burg at Vienna I have only one large room, an antechamber and small kitchen—really a very poor apartment; but the honour is great, as we live with the Emperor in the same Palace. This is a special grace and was not promised me when I came. Then you will be sorry to hear that I was *officially* reprimanded for not being in gala toilet on the Emperor's fête day last Friday. I don't know how I could have been so stupid. I did not even put on white kid gloves! Still, on the whole, thank God, all goes well. When the Arch-

duchess saw I was not dressed enough for her grandfather's fête, she came and took my arm and tried to pass it off. I think she likes me, but with Royalty it is so difficult. They change for nothing. She hated her English mistress before me, and the poor thing had a wretched position, but for all that she managed to stay four years.

“ Our Archduchess has ideas of her own, and to celebrate her grandfather's fête we lit a bonfire and cooked potatoes and ate them in a kind of picnic. First the Director of the Gardens—a very high official—had to dig them before our eyes, and the Archduchess and all her ladies helped to pick them up. She could hardly be prevented from washing them. Then we cooked them. Then we all sat down, and the footmen gave us plates, knives, butter, salt, bread and wine, and we ate those precious potatoes !

“ All the time the Archduchess kept exclaiming :

“ ‘ How amusing it is ! ’ and

“ ‘ Don't you think it is great fun ? ’

“ So you see she is a baby in some things, but—she sees *everything* that goes on around her, and is most curious. She tries to help me and tell me what to do. She has taught me all my curtsies, and when to bow. ‘ This for Grandpapa—this for Mamma, and this for me ! ’ And it is very quaint to see her watch me when I meet her mother. Of course, none of the other ladies knows she does this, and she loves the secret.

“ I have just heard my service for to-day. I dine, have tea and supper with the Archduchess. A hard day for me, but I am always glad to be of more use to her.

“ With best love,

“ Ever your loving,

“ M.”

CHAPTER XIII

ONE morning in November, the Archduchess blithely informed me she was to have no lesson that day as her cousin, the Princess Dora of Coburg, was again coming to visit her. I had had a brief acquaintance with Princess Dora the day of my arrival at Laxenburg. I thought her a sweet, good-tempered little girl, but I had heard later from the Court ladies that she was the imp of mischief personified. The poor child had received a most preposterous bringing up. Her mother, Princess Louise of Coburg, was a daughter of King Leopold of Belgium and a sister of our Crown Princess. She was a vain, frivolous woman and took no interest in her children. Her son Leopold's tutor fell in love with Princess Dora's governess. The two married, but neither being willing to give up the pecuniary advantages of their positions, for some unheard of reason they were permitted to keep their posts on, using the Royal nurseries as a dovecot, and poor Dora made the third in an interesting family group.

Her brother Leo, being older, dined with his parents, so he at least was saved that humiliation.

As a result of this co-operative scheme, at fifteen Dora was, with the exception of much worldly knowledge she would have been better without, as ignorant as a child of ten years.

She arrived on this visit to Laxenburg about mid-day, and at two o'clock the Archduchess brought her gaily to my apartments "to play." When we were alone, I sometimes relaxed and played the Merry Andrew with the Archduchess for a time. Consequently she loved coming to me, and I felt that in this way I could gain more fully an influence that might later be used for her good, poor child. But to cut the same capers with Princess Dora, who had not the natural cuteness to keep such innocent escapades locked in her breast, was indeed another matter. However, I found quite dignified means of amusing the two, which answered very well until Princess Dora's strangeness began to wear off, and then she proceeded to take a hand in organizing and arranging the play. And such a wheedling manner she had, that before I realized the import of the game I found myself impersonating a wretched mother with a capacity for cruelty that made me gasp when I was directed to play my part to the life.

The Archduchess and Princess Dora were my two children, and the drunken father was—I am thankful to say—wholly imaginary, although Dora was quite capable of impressing any of the high officials of the Palace for the purpose of playing the part. I had to

knock these wretched half-starved children about ; the Archduchess very soon tired of her part in the programme, much to Dora's disgust as she seemed to enjoy it thoroughly, but as I was anything but keen upon my rôle, I insisted that the Archduchess—in this instance—should have her own way. But can anything more pitiful be imagined than a Royal Princess of the age of Princess Dora finding high amusement in such a silly childish fashion.

The next afternoon I was asked to drive with the visitor. My soul was, I confess, filled with dismay, as I had heard of Princess Dora's horsemanship and her gay recklessness, meant to inspire terror in the breasts of the ladies-in-waiting. She drove the Archduchess's Swedish ponies. The Archduchess herself had tried her best to frighten me when I first went out with her, but I had been warned not to heed, as, if I showed the white feather, she would have no more of me. Therefore, when she suddenly left the road and drove rapidly through the woods, missing trees by a hair's breadth, I sat calmly viewing the woodland beauties which surrounded us, apparently not seeing that out of the corners of her pretty eyes she was noting the effect ; inwardly, I was alternately thanking Heaven that a reliable groom was perched behind us, and praying a benign Providence which watches over children and fools to grant us protection. Of course, when the Archduchess found she could not frighten me, she gave up trying, and kept her pony carriage in its normal

position, with the four wheels on the road. But many a nervous headache did I suffer first, and I felt that to go through the same performance with the Princess Dora was really a little too great a demand upon my patience. However, as all the other ladies declined to risk their necks, I consented. Of course, when she also discovered that I did not scream each time we almost took a wheel off, nor did I snatch the reins when the ponies were deliberately driven at a gate, just stopping in time, she gave up her pranks. But I fancy she found the drives extremely dull.

Princess Louise, Dora's mother, was the vainest woman I have ever known. Often and often, when she was visiting her sister, Crown Princess Stephanie, have I seen her sitting in the garden at Laxenburg with a small mirror in her hand, gazing at her own reflection from every possible angle. She would amuse herself for hours in this way, and Narcissus himself could not have shown greater reluctance to leave the beloved image. She was weak and shallow, and was largely instrumental in alienating her sister Stephanie's affections from her husband, the Crown Prince. She had a vulgar mind, and no doubt in the Archduke's life, previous to his marriage, there were many episodes best left untold, but Louise hauled all the skeletons from their cupboards, and served them up as savoury morsels to her younger sister. Nor did she spare her own husband, Prince Philip of Coburg. That he

neglected her was well known, but no doubt he had become thoroughly disgusted with her.

At the time I was in Vienna she was the subject of much gossip. She began riding as an exercise to preserve her figure, and had as her riding master one Mattachich-Keglivch, an Hungarian Reit-Meister in a regiment of Uhlans, who held the rank of Lieutenant. He was considered one of the handsomest of the Hungarian officers, and he became acquainted with the Coburgs through a friend who was Adjutant to Prince Philip. His physical attractions quickly took the fancy of Princess Louise, and soon there was a perfect whirlwind of gossip in every circle of society in Vienna. The adjutant of Prince Philip resigned - because of the part he was expected to play in the drama.

The Princess complained to the Archduke Louis Victor, the Emperor's brother, of the "impertinence." The Archduke's reply was to take the young officer into his own service! She was meeting Mattachich by stealth continually, and one day she took her little daughter Dora with her to the Prater—the Hyde Park of Vienna; there she left her alone on a seat in a quiet part of the park, while she went for a stroll with Mattachich. The police found the poor little Princess crying her heart out, and took her back to the Coburg Palace. Princess Louise's extravagance knew no bounds. We heard stories of her buying sixteen hats and fifteen pairs of costly corsets at one time! Her debts became so enormous that

the Emperor sent Prince Montennovo to the King of Belgium to try and persuade him to pay some of his daughter's creditors. King Leopold's reply was that his two daughters, Stephanie and Louise, were dead to him. When this message was brought to the Emperor, he remarked: "An honourable man pays the debts of his dead children."

About this time I began to see much of the Choteks, the Countess Zeuka Chotek being a lady-in-waiting to the Archduchess's mother, Princess Stephanie. Count Bohuslav Chotek was Viennese Minister at Brussels at the time the marriage between the Crown Prince of Austria, Archduke Rudolph, and Princess Stephanie was arranged. Bohemians and shrewd, ambitious women the Choteks were. Catholic in every sinew, they were devoted to their Church and country, and every move was made under the directions of their spiritual advisers to further these two interests.

I remember seeing the Countess Sophie in the suite box at the Opera shortly after the romance began between her and the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. She was standing a little forward alone. She had the most beautiful figure I have ever seen. Archduke Franz Ferdinand was also a splendid-looking man, the last person one would associate with illness, but it was that very illness which won Sophie Chotek her chance, and she was clever enough to make the most of it. It is said that the Archduke's recovery was due to his fury when he heard that, considering him

as good as dead, his brother, the contemptible Archduke Otto, had deliberately taken his place as heir presumptive at the Austrian Court. Whatever the cause, he recovered, married Sophie Chotek, and lived many years to fulfil the duties demanded of him by the State with more decency and dignity than his brother could have done; and for this I think the good influence of Sophie Chotek was responsible.

Shortly after I went to Laxenburg, in the course of a conversation with the Countess Coudenhove, I learnt that no vestments had been presented to the Laxenburg church from the Court since the time of Maria Theresa. At once I made up my mind that should be no longer a fact, for I would make a complete set.

After imparting my plan to the Countess, she entered whole-heartedly into it, and told me she had an exquisite brocaded court-train which she had worn once, and if so minded, and it would answer the purpose, I should have the material. I went to see it, and found it exactly what I wanted. It was a superb piece of heaviest creamy-white satin, profusely brocaded in small bunches of primroses. After carefully unpicking all the dress and train, I found there was ample material, so I set about arranging my patterns. All the primroses I embroidered in their natural colours. When the chasuble was finished, it was really beautiful, and when Monseigneur Fisher-Colbrie came to Laxenburg he always wore "my vestments."

November 19th.

“St. Elizabeth’s Day has arrived, and with it white kid gloves and congratulations, as it is the little Archduchess’s name-day. The whole Court was in gala dress, and we all made curtsies, and little speeches, and kissed her hands. I gave her a plant of carnations in a pretty basket, tied and arranged gaily with ribbon. It was my first experience as a lady of the Court at a florist’s shop, and very nicely I was rooked.”

I thought the fête day should be celebrated with much gaiety, but evidently it was to be otherwise, as all the ceremony was carried through in a most deeply serious fashion. In fact, by now I was beginning to realize how very seriously the Court took itself, and as I never met anyone who could see a joke if it was made, I began to get quite solemn in my conversation. In fact, I only made an occasional joke for my own eating.

“Château Impérial,

“Laxenburg, bei Wien.

“*November 24th, 1895.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“We go to Vienna on Thursday. I am not quite certain of my address there, as so much etiquette is observed as to how I may be addressed. You must have gathered by this time that the Austrian Court is most strict with regard to this. Our little Archduchess makes her first Communion on December 8th. The Emperor is coming, and it will be very grand, I

believe. I am looking forward with much anxiety to the life in Vienna—all will be strange again. Thanks very much for sending Sir Roger de Coverley so promptly. Unfortunately our Countess slipped and hurt herself dancing it, and has been in bed some days, so the dance does not hold the high place it did!

“I do not hear how the Count Badeni is getting on now. I hope he will become popular. I wonder how much Balfour will get?”

“With best love to all,

“Ever your loving,

“M.”

“Château Impérial,

“Laxenburg, Vienna.

“November 27th, 1895.

“MY DEAR A.,

“I am getting on very well. Our little Princess is charming. She says to me several times a day:

“‘I like you very much; do you like me?’

“She is not too badly spoilt, and very clever.

“We have soldiers sentinelled everywhere, outside my door and outside my windows, in the corridors and on the staircases. In Vienna, they say it is even worse. But as my rooms communicate, they will not distress me. I send you my address in Vienna.

“Your loving sister,

“M.”

CHAPTER XIV

“Château Impérial,

“Laxenburg.

“*November 27th, 1895.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“Just a line to send you my address in Vienna. We go to-morrow. I am very anxious to see my rooms. In Vienna I shall have plenty of service, and I hope to go out with the Archduchess—which is a great privilege. She is very pleased with ‘What Katy Did,’ and I should be glad of any simple children’s stories, amusing if possible, but not with much imagination, like fairy stories. It is so good for my position to be able to please and interest her, which is not often easy. I shall go and see the Badenis as soon as I get to Vienna.

“With best love from

“M.

“Address : Hofburg, Vienna, Austria.”

To have my apartments in the Hofburg, under the same roof with the Emperor, was much more than I had expected. It was all very quaint and interesting ;

in fact, this part of the Palace is the oldest house in Europe of which there is any record. It has always been a Royal Palace. The windows of my rooms looked out into the large, square court, and directly across were the Emperor's apartments, but on the first floor. I was on the third. Underneath my rooms were those of the Archduchess, and those of the Crown Princess Stephanie. The Empress Elizabeth had the first floor at the east end, and the west end was devoted to guest rooms.

In the centre of the court stands the statue of Emperor Ferdinand. A great illuminated clock, with the moon's phases above the dial, marked the time for us, as it had done for generations—marking the comedies and tragedies of Royalty ; marking, too, in similar fashion, the joys and sorrows of their entourage : war and peace were alike to it, and I often wished the ancient pendulum could tell all the old face had seen. What a volume it would be !

Magnificent gateways are at each of the four corners, the Palace being very deep, with rooms looking from each side. Of course, this is merely the living part ; the chapel, libraries, art galleries, etc., being connected by immense corridors : there are also the stables, the barracks, the kitchens, and all the hundred and one offices which go to make up the official residence of a King-Emperor. The place was infested with soldiers, so that it was impossible to move from one room to another without being observed.

Fortunately my rooms communicated, so I managed



VIENNA.—THE BURGPLATZ, WITH THE STATUE OF KAISER FRANZ.

very well ; but I remember on one occasion, when an alarm of fire was given, I rushed out of my door, and along the corridor, which was swarming with soldiers, and as I turned the corner I ran full tilt into the Captain of the Guard, coming rapidly from the opposite direction, who, though an extremely smart and able officer, stood only about five feet two, with the lamentable result that I knocked his sword out of his hand on the stone floor, and it was only by the greatest good luck that I kept my own equilibrium. Happily it was only a false alarm of fire, but that Captain cherished a grudge against me to the end of my service.

We of the suite were each given a maid to attend to our rooms, and cook for us what we did not get from the Royal kitchens. For instance, I had tea three times a week from the Royal kitchens, and if I was not out on the other four days, I had to furnish my own, and my maid got it for me. My dinner I had from an hotel when the Emperor was away, as then the Royal kitchen was always closed.

But there is rather more than a strict economy observed in the Royal Austrian *ménage*. The Empress Elizabeth indulged in a most eccentric diet, arranged for the express purpose of keeping her figure exactly the same weight. She had a horror of growing stout. At eleven o'clock each day she was served with a cup of broth : this was made from the strongest essence of game and meat, large quantities of which were used in the preparation. This broth always cost thirty-six gulden a cup (about three pounds ten

shillings), and at this time, as particularly stringent measures of economy were being put into force, it was decided that half the quantity of material would be sufficient, so it was cut down to eighteen gulden a day, or about one pound ten shillings. When the broth was, as usual, presented to the Empress, she could not drink it, so that particular cheeseparer was at once stopped.

“ Hofburg,

“ Vienna, Austria.

“ *December 1st, 1895.*

“ DEAREST VER,

“ Just a few lines to tell you that I was presented to the Emperor this morning! He was most gracious and kind, and talked to me for some little time—of course, in French. I was so confused that it was necessary for him to repeat the first phrase he said, as I did not understand. Of course, this is a very great thing for me; besides the glory, it improves my position very much. I wish you could have seen my curtsies. They were, I can assure you, down to the ground. The Emperor has a very kind, simple manner of speaking. He said first:

“ ‘ How long have you been with the little one ? ’
(*la petite*). Then :

“ ‘ Does she speak English well ? ’ and :

“ ‘ You were in Lemberg ? ’

“ ‘ With the Minister or his brother ? ’

“ Then he made me another bow, I dipped another

profound curtsy, and it was over. He came all across the room to me. I was too frightened to go to him. The Archduchess was very pleased I was presented, as she likes me.

“ Ever your loving,
“ M.”

“ Hofburg, Vienna.
“ *December 4th, 1895.*

“ MY DEAR A.,

“ Thanks very much for your letter, but please address Hofburg (*i.e.* Royal Palace), not Hofberg (*i.e.* High Mountain). I am not a hermit yet !

“ Yesterday I spent the morning with Wanda Badeni, who was delighted to see me, and very pleasant. Politics here are in a very ticklish state, as no doubt you know. Wanda’s father has his work cut out, but he is a clever man, and things will probably improve. I know you will quite understand that I cannot risk writing all one sees here, but there may be queer experiences before me. However, I get up and go to bed with the proud consciousness that I am near the top of the tree.

“ Write soon and tell me how you are going on. What a different life ours is to what we expected when we were young.

“ With love,

“ From your affectionate sister,
“ M.

“P.S.—We are having much snow now, which stays about six inches on the ground, and is always melting. It is filthy to walk in. This is the only town I know where ladies can walk about the streets unattended after dark, until eight o'clock. All the ladies of the Court do it.”

The next few days were full of preparation for the Archduchess's First Communion. There were instructions every day from Jesuit Fathers, and we were all so pleased at her pious, good disposition. I had promised the nuns at the convent of the Sacred Heart that, if possible, I would try ~~and~~ arrange that the Archduchess should come to them for Benediction, so every moment of my time was filled. Early on Sunday morning, December 8th, I rose and went to Holy Communion at six o'clock, before the seven o'clock Mass, and then hurriedly returned to the Hofburg for the Archduchess's First Communion in St. Joseph's, the Emperor's private chapel.

During the simple, touching ceremony, the aged Emperor was in my plain view. The Archduchess was a sweet picture in her simple white frock, with the filmy veil floating around her. As she knelt to receive the Holy Communion, her emotion had rendered her pale, and her extraordinarily long and thick dark eyelashes lay upon her cheeks, and the expression upon her face was saintly. The poor old Emperor was deeply affected, and tears rolled down his wrinkled cheeks. It is at such times as these, I was



From a photograph.

THE ARCHDUCHESS ELIZABETH.

told, that he is almost overcome by grief for his poor son. He is so nice and gentle, everyone loves and respects him. After the service we all went downstairs for congratulations.

In the afternoon we went to the Chapel of the Sacred Heart. The Crown Princess accompanied our Archduchess, with Countess Chotek and me in attendance. The most illustrious ladies of the Viennese nobility were in the chapel. The Archduchess was photographed in her First Communion robes, but the picture was strictly private, distribution being limited to members of the Royal Family. She, however, determined that I should have one, and when the Archduchess determined a thing, it was bound to be done. Therefore, one day she came gaily to me, and presented me with a handsome red morocco double frame, containing two pictures of herself, one the much-discussed First Communion photograph, the other a sweet one, done in her ordinary simple dress.

"This," she said, pointing to the demure figure kneeling on the *prie-dieu*, "is me when I am good. This," pointing to the other which looked out of the frame with wide, dancing eyes, "is me when I'm naughty."

I was seeing a good deal of Wanda Badeni just now, and also a little of the Countess, but both she and the Count Badeni were so absorbed in their social and political duties that their hours of leisure were but few. I had asked Madame Merry del Val if she

had met the Badenis when they were in Rome, and I had the following reply :

“ It was odd I never met the Badenis. Once I was at the Countess Revertera’s in the evening, and she proposed to introduce the Countess B. to me. I said sincerely that I should be glad. However, it was not done. I can only suppose that the Badenis went out chiefly in the Quirinal society, and up to now I have succeeded in never once going into such ; you see, we are accredited, happily, to the Holy See, and have nothing to do with the Court.”

About this time I went to an At Home at the Badenis’. Many interesting notabilities were there, and the Countess Chotek came with her father, Count Bohuslav Chotek. The Count was not really an old man in years, but he had grown very childish, and sometimes did and said things which made it impossible to keep a straight face, even for the sake of politeness. At this reception, near the buffet, was a low stand upon which were flat cakes. Count Chotek evidently mistook the chocolate of the cakes for a dark polished seat, and, smiling cheerfully, sat down upon the stand. There he remained in happy ignorance until he had finished his refreshment, when he rose and tottered off, a cake, a marvel of the Viennese confectioner’s art, sticking tightly to his coat, greatly to the entertainment of the other guests.

Before Christmas, the Crown Princess took the Archduchess with her for a short visit to Munich and Vels. On the 19th I received the following post-card, dated from Munich :

“I am vel, it es beutiful, mach perfier dan en Wienna. Wienna es *in comparesor* hored.—ELISABETH.”

This is a fair sample of the Archduchess's English, and the handwriting compared very favourably with other specimens of her penmanship. It made me quite angry when I thought that she had had an English governess for four years previous to my coming, and yet she could write and spell no better than a child of six, and she was fourteen. Poor little neglected thing !

CHAPTER XV

AT this time it was a marvel to me that Madame Touzet, the doyen of our suite, could keep her position. Always ill, and nearly seventy, she was not at all the person to be with so young a child as the Archduchess. However, as she had been French governess to the Archduchess Valerie, and continued under her protection, the Emperor permitted her to remain, although it was very unfair to the rest of us, as her position carried more privileges and higher salary than the others, and we had practically all her service to do, except that which was most desirable.

The Countess Coudenrove could be most charming when she liked, but, alas! that was not frequently. She managed all the business connected with the suite, and always greatly to her own material advantage. These were the most important personages attached to us. Besides these, there were myself, Fräulein Tomor and Fräulein Habner, both Hungarians, and the two attendants whom the Archduchess really loved. Our Hofrath was Doctor Armanthaler, and the Kammer Hof Meister was



*COUNTESS COUDENHOV.

Riedl, both of whom had been in the suite of the late Crown Prince Rudolph at the time of his death, and were deeply attached to him. After his tragic death, by order of the Emperor, they were attached to the little Archduchess and had transferred their devoted allegiance to her. Upon the First Communion of the Archduchess, Madame Touzet was ennobled, and Dr. Armanthaler was offered a "Von," which he declined, saying contemptuously, "Our family have had that since Maria Theresa, but I never use it!" This created a great deal of talk in Court circles, being looked upon as most socialistic. Riedl had been the Crown Prince's confidential valet, and was with him that dreadful night at Meyerling—that night which had thrown an impenetrable veil of mystery over the Austrian Royal Family.

I should, indeed, have been more than human had I not, when the opportunity offered, endeavoured to probe the silence of all those who really knew. Riedl was, I suppose, the one living person absolutely conversant with all the facts. He was very loyal, however, and it was only on the rarest occasions, and then only by the most tactful questioning, that any facts could be elicited from him. For years he was given a gulden a day to hold his tongue, but so many various tales got about, and it was found that he was truly faithful, so with its usual parsimoniousness the Austrian Treasury stopped the payment. Dr. Armanthaler was a man whom it would have been impossible to bribe in any way. Both he and

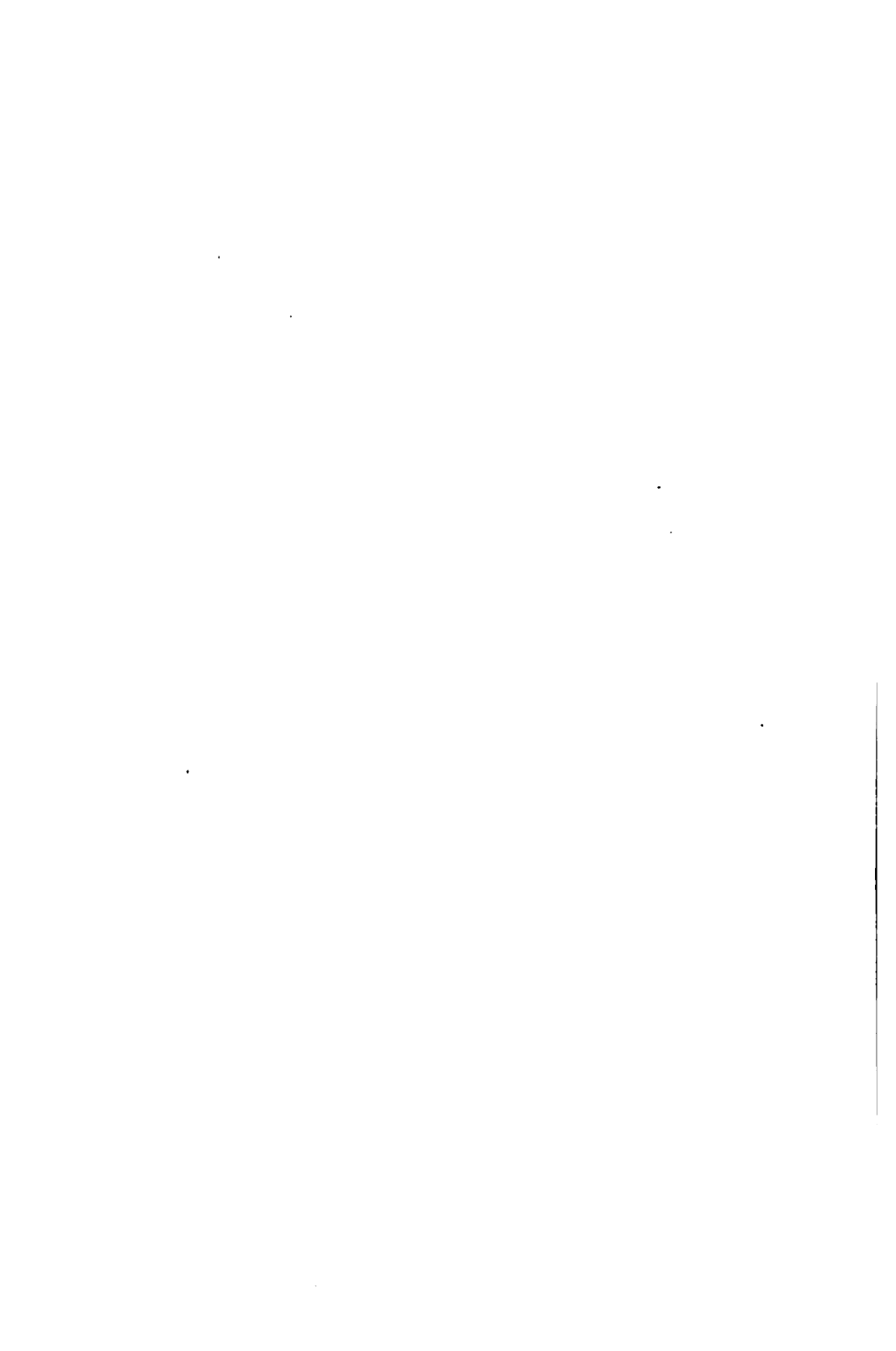
Riedl were as devoted to the little Archduchess as they had been to her father. But Armanthaler was a blunt man with no courtier's manner, and it was quite impossible for him to lie. A direct question annoyed him, but he either replied or kept silent. Thus, little by little, it was possible to lift the veil a trifle, and steal a glance at the secret it had covered.

There has been more than enough said about Maria Vetesera's parentage. Reports were even current that she was a daughter of the Emperor, and that the discovery of this relationship had so frenzied Rudolph that he had shot her and then himself. All sorts of wild conjectures were rumoured in which there was not one iota of truth. That the Baroness Vetesera led a gay life was well known, and in Buda-Pest it was said that before Maria was born, the well-known white horses of Prince Esterhazy stood always before the door of her house. But this, with other tales, may be taken for what they are worth, for I am sure it is a fact that Maria's parentage, or lack of parentage, had nothing to do with the tragedy.

The Crown Prince, *blasé*, discontented with his married life, and wearied with the stiff etiquette of the Austrian Court, saw this pretty little creature, barely eighteen, just out of a convent, fresh and childlike in her simple enjoyment of the brilliant panorama of the world spread before her eyes for the first time when she was taken to the Opera, and showing all the pretty excitement of a child. With



THE ARCHDUKE RUDOLPH OF AUSTRIA.



almost incredible cynicism, he set to work to arrange a meeting. A lady of the Court, who, it was well known, was in serious money difficulties, was approached; and in return for financial assistance sufficient to pay her debts, she obtained an introduction to the Baroness Vetesera, and professed a great and sudden affection for the pretty younger daughter, whom she frequently invited to her house. Here the Crown Prince met this fresh and innocent young girl, without the slightest restraint. As the Baroness Vetesera was far outside the pale of the Austrian Court, it would have been impossible for Prince Rudolph to have met the girl, except through some person of his own station. Also it was well known that this lady's debts were paid by the Crown Prince. This was possible without scandal, as she was a relation of his mother, the Empress.

Maria was but a nice-minded, guileless child, and no doubt Rudolph led her on to believe that he could obtain a divorce from Rome, and would then be free to marry her. There has been much written and said about a mysterious casket left by the Crown Prince, which is supposed to have contained revolutionary documents, but no one in the Court believed anything of the kind. If any casket containing papers was left, those papers had to do with a petition to Rome for a divorce. The Emperor would not allow the petition to be sent. That the Emperor and the Crown Prince had quarrelled on this point all the Court knew, but that Maria had insulted the Crown

Princess Stephanie was assuredly a product of someone's fertile imagination. Years after the tragedy, when I was with the little Archduchess and the Crown Princess at Abbazia, Princess Stephanie met the Baroness Vetesera with her eldest daughter on the esplanade; the Princess approached and spoke most kindly to them.

Here are the facts as gathered from those who were actually at the Castle at the time. Maria's visit to Meyerling to meet Prince Rudolph was covered by the lady already mentioned. Arrived at Meyerling, she found there a party of Prince Rudolph's loose men friends, and some disreputable actresses. Maria was shocked and offended that the Crown Prince should insult her by expecting that she would be willing to consort with such creatures. Doubtless the position in which she really stood dawned upon her for the first time. Refusing to join this rowdy supper-party, she immediately withdrew to her own room, and Riedl was sent to her with a tray of food.

The Crown Prince was furious with his intimates for their shocking conduct. He himself, although he was known to have been drinking at this time, was probably, in comparison with his friends, fairly sober. He did not hide his anger at the objectionable conduct which had offended Maria, and a dispute was soon followed by blows. The Prince was attacked by his companions, and in the *mêlée*, in which the aristocrats, with at least sixteen quarterings upon their coats of arms, laid about them with anything



THE ARCHDUCHESS STÉPHANIE.

they could seize upon as a weapon, he received a tremendous blow on the temple, which broke the champagne bottle used as a bludgeon and bashed in the upper half of that side of his face. It must have been a blow wielded by an almost titanic strength, as pieces of the broken glass remained buried in the skull. Others were wounded, and, perhaps, one sobered by the seriousness of the affair and realizing that even if he escaped, Maria Vetesera would give evidence of the *personnel* of the party, stole away and fired a rifle through the window of her room, killing her instantly where she knelt, clad only in her nightdress, evidently crouching in terror at the sounds from the supper-room.

The next day, about three in the afternoon, at least eighteen hours after the tragedy, Prince Philip of Coburg, brother-in-law of the Crown Princess Stephanie and intimate friend of the Archduke Rudolph, was asked to break the news to the Emperor, who was told that the Crown Prince had died of apoplexy. The poor, gentle old Emperor was grief-stricken, but he thought first of the Empress whom, through everything, through all misunderstandings and in spite of her eccentricities, he loved first and best in all the world. Later, to his inexpressible anguish, the report was brought to him that Rudolph had killed himself. Then, when the real facts were made known, it was said that the State Archives could not again be changed. However, the Pope ordered Masses to be said for the repose of the

Archduke's soul in every church in the Empire, an absolute proof to the world that he was murdered, as no Mass may be said for a suicide.

Other deaths took place at Meyerling Castle, and for the fifteen days following the Archduke Rudolph's murder, Doctor Niedehofer, the Emperor's own physician, went to and fro every day. Maria Vetesera was buried in the dead of the night by soldiers. It was necessary to have a casket made to hold her in the kneeling position in which she was discovered, as so long a time had elapsed between the actual shooting and the discovery that her body was rigid. On the simple cross which marks her tomb is graven, "We come up as a flower, and are cut off."

So, too, in the darkness of night, borne in a carriage drawn by horses whose shoes were carefully muffled, and guarded by a few soldiers whose boots had been covered with felt, the body of the murdered Archduke, heir to the throne of the proudest kingdom in the world, was carried silently to the Hofburg and placed in a small room. An artist was brought quietly into the Castle, and the disfigured side of the dead Crown Prince's handsome face was moulded and modelled in wax with such skill that the public never suspected the extent of the wounds when they passed the bier in the Imperial chapel in the Hofburg, where the body lay in state. When the artist had finished his work and everything was decently in order, the Crown Princess and her little daughter,

our Archduchess Elizabeth, were brought to see the remains of husband and father. The Crown Princess was not moved and seemed quite indifferent, but the tiny Archduchess looked with dilated eyes at the quiet face, and then, clutching her attendant's skirts, demanded wildly to be taken away. "That is not my father!" she cried, and maintained this attitude up to the time I left her service, some twelve years after the tragedy.

Doubtless this story got abroad, and was the nucleus of the report that the Crown Prince was not dead, but had quarrelled violently with the Emperor and so could not return to Austria during his father's lifetime, or only at some period of great crisis in Austrian affairs. I have met many people who firmly believe this version of the much garbled story of the Meyerling affair. Of course, ever to use Meyerling Castle again as a residence was out of all question, so the Emperor decided to turn it into a Carmelite convent and chapel in memory of the Archduke. It was begun almost immediately, but the difficulties encountered by the builders were almost incredible. The workmen fell ill and died; they had accidents and became crippled; the foundations would not hold: it was exactly as though some diabolical agency was endeavouring to hinder the reconstruction.

It was on a beautiful sunny day, although cold, that I first drove with the Countess Coudenhove to see the convent and chapel. No expense had

been spared to make the chapel beautiful, and the surroundings were so peaceful and holy that it needed a tremendous mental effort to realize that this spot had been the scene of foul orgies and wicked murders.

Many society ladies renounced their worldly lives when the convent was established here and assumed the veil, which means such selflessness and sacrifice. Amongst these was the Countess Stolberg. Her cook, who was a pious woman, entered the order at the same time, and the cook was made Sister Superior!

We of the suite were permitted to go to Meyerling whenever we chose, although it is a private chapel. It is only about fifteen miles from Vienna, and with good horses is a pleasant drive, as the roads are excellent. It was with the greatest difficulty that we could ever persuade the little Archduchess to go there. She abhorred the place, and when a special service was held and she was obliged to attend it, she was quite pale and overwrought, clinging to me the entire time, as unobtrusively as possible, and seeming to feel the need of human sympathy and support. And always she reiterated, "But it was *not* my father!"

The Crown Princess was perfectly callous about going, never seeming to mind any more than she would have done were she paying a visit to the place where a pet canary had died! She had no affection for her husband, but the hope of one day wearing the Crown of an Empress was always before her.

Now she was nothing. A widow of a Habsburg has no official position in the Court, and her situation is most unpleasant.

The Crown Princess's feeling of resentment at her own unenviable position usurped any, even passing, sorrow which she might otherwise have felt for her husband's tragic and dreadful death. To be left a widow in the circumstances placed her in a difficult enough position, but as Stephanie was heartily disliked by all classes it was really terrible for her. The Emperor was the one person who was kind to her, and he overlooked that which had gone before, as few, if any, in his place would have done.

CHAPTER XVI

“ Hofburg, Vienna,

“ *December 28th, 1895.*

“ MY DEAR A.,

“ Your flowers arrived beautifully ; I put them in tepid water and the roses *bloomed*. All Christmas my room was lovely. Thanks also very much for your letter received to-day, and please accept my best wishes for the New Year. There was, on Christmas Eve, a large Christmas tree in our Archduchess's marble *salon*, and placed around it were tables—one for each of us. The Crown Princess and our little one gave the tables, as each was called in to receive it.

“ On Monday the Countess Coudenhove said to me, ‘ You may go and choose Christmas presents (for yourself to be put on your table) to the extent of seventy-five gulden ’—a little more than six pounds. I chose fifteen pairs of gloves (we use so enormously many white ones here) and a dozen and a half fine white handkerchiefs. I received a lot of presents, the chief being from our Archduchess, a brooch with small diamonds and a really fine pearl. We generally receive things for our rooms, and some

of the ladies possess all the furniture in their own apartments. I do not want this, as, if I do ever leave Austria, what should I do with the things? And, besides, the furniture they give is quite good enough for me.

"After the ceremony of presenting the tables was finished, I quickly took all my sweets to the English Home, where I found there would be forty to dinner on Christmas Day, so my sweets were as nothing amongst so many. I hastened back and told our Countess, and she got for me all those left from the Royal table. I took them down, and then heard they had no wine, so I gave money for that. It was then about 9 p.m. on Christmas Eve, and with all the excitement I had eaten very little supper, and it is a strict fast with us, but I went with the Countess into the Palace church, and we said our Rosary together, and then I went to bed.

"On Christmas Day I got up at five for six o'clock Mass. There is no Midnight Mass in the Palace. There was lovely music, as the Opera is subsidized by the Emperor, and the great singers have to sing on special occasions. As we always hear three Masses on Christmas Day, I was not back in my rooms till eight. It was cold, just beginning to get light, and my maid was late, nothing arranged, my room not done, no coffee. It was melancholy. However, soon all was right again. I dined with Madame at 12.30, and after that I slept the sleep of fatigue and Christmas.

"It has turned very cold now, lots of snow. In the outskirts of the town it is very deep, and men work night and day to keep the Palace free and clean.

"The Archduchess is to go to Abbazia on the 12th of January. She is not well and has not been quite the thing for several days, but to-day she is in bed. I hope it is nothing, but there is much influenza about and she has had it several times. Christmas was a very exciting, nervous time for her. Please don't speak of the 'Russian *Church*,' but the Russian Schism. The word 'Church,' I understand, you claim for your own little heresy, but there is a limit to such charity.

"Ever your affectionate sister,

"M."

"Hofburg, Vienna,

"*January 2nd, 1896.*

"MY DEAREST VER,

"The Archduchess is well again and they all go to Abbazia on the 13th inst. I have two months' holiday, but am not allowed to go to England, as I cannot be so far away in case I am wanted. I mean to go to Rome. Abbazia is nearer there, and to stay in this cold when it is not necessary seems to me too foolish. It is eleven degrees Réaumur, below freezing. It is awful. The Merry del Vals advise me to come, and they are such good friends to me; besides, I know many people in Rome, and I love the city so. I shall go towards the end of the month, I think.

"I saw the New Year in, in the Palace chapel with our Countess and Baroness Vescy, an Hungarian lady and lady-in-waiting to the Archduchess Valerie, the Emperor's daughter. At about half-past eleven we went through the long, cold corridors to the chapel. The chapel was in darkness, only the red glimmer from the sanctuary lamp in the chancel shone out through the gloom. We could not even see each other. You may be sure, dear Ver, I thought of you. The corridors are kept always lighted brilliantly and are, of course, lined with soldiers. They looked with curiosity at us as we passed back and forth.

"New Year's Day was nothing especial here. Black silk dress and white kid gloves were the chief features. It is so tiresome that, although I am often with the Archduchess and we play and talk quite freely, on any occasion like that I must dress up and make a speech to her. It always seems so unreal.

"Last Wednesday I went with the Badenis to the opera *Mignon*. It was very pretty, but I am afraid we talked more than we listened. Wanda makes her first plunge in Vienna society here on January 6th. A ball. I hope she will be a success.

"On New Year's Eve there was a great reception; the large square was full of carriages, hundreds of them. The Ambassadors were all under my windows, and each had a mounted soldier to clear the way for his carriage. They take precedence always. The reception was held in the name of the Empress who is not here.

“I do hope we shall not have war, but things look *very* bad, and everyone seems to think it likely. The little Archduchess said to me the other day : ‘ But even if Austria fights with England, you will be a *little* for Grandpapa, won’t you ? ’

“Write soon to me here. I will let you know all my movements.

“With fondest love, dearest Ver,

“From your ever loving,

“M.”

The Empress was at this time at Cap Martin, and shortly after, when war was declared between Greece and Turkey, she ordered her yacht and announced her intention of sailing for Greece. It is needless for me to enlarge upon the international complications which this move would have given birth to, and as soon as the news leaked out in the Palace we were all wild with excitement. Of course, it had to be kept strictly secret, but no one was surprised, as the partiality of the Empress for the Greeks was too well known. She was a Greek scholar, and kept always in her entourage a Greek professor who accompanied her upon her long walks into the country, reading aloud in Greek the entire time. This was very trying, and a change of readers was frequent, as the health of one after another broke down. There were Cabinet meetings, and telegrams were showered upon her from Vienna, imploring her not to go. But entreaties were vain ;

she adhered to her first decision. Then the Emperor himself went to Cap Martin, and what pressure he brought to bear upon his wilful spouse we never heard, but he succeeded in saving the situation.

The reception and ball were held with the idea, I fancy, of giving the impression to the world that the Empress was in Vienna. We had had much gossip about this ball, as Princess Louise of Coburg, our Crown Princess's sister, was behaving more and more outrageously, and many of the Princesses of the Austrian nobility declared they would not attend if she were to be there. Of course, this was brought to the Emperor's notice, and he ordered her to leave Vienna. She went to Abbazia, where she was quickly joined by von Mattachich-Keglivch, her former riding master.

I watched this ball, quite hidden from view in the musicians' gallery. The guests were assembled some time before the Imperial family entered. The ladies' jewels were magnificent, and Hungarian nobles, wearing their national court dress and ablaze with diamonds, added to the gorgeousness. I could see the Countess Badeni and Wanda, and many other people whom I knew.

About eleven o'clock the Master of Ceremonies entered the ballroom, and giving three taps with his wand upon the floor, a space in the centre of the room was rapidly cleared. Then the Emperor, looking very regal in the uniform of a General of the Guards—cream, with quantities of gold braid

and scarlet—a very striking uniform—his jewelled orders blazing upon his breast, and his gentle old eyes regarding the scene benignly, entered with the first lady of his family—not a widow, as they are out of all ceremonies in the Austrian Court. After them came the rest of the Imperial family in strict order of precedence, the guests curtsying low on all sides as the Royalties passed them. After all the Royalties had assembled dancing began. The Emperor did not dance, but walked slowly round the room, speaking to a favoured few, and I was pleased to see that amongst those so honoured were the Badenis. The Emperor remained about an hour and a half, and then supper was served, after which the dancing became more animated.

On the 13th, the Archduchess left for Abbazia. I saw her off, and looked forward to a fortnight of quiet, and the joy of doing exactly as I pleased.

“Rome,

“*January 14th.*

“MY DEAR M.,

“Please excuse my using a friendly hand instead of my own to thank you for your letter. I am not ill, but my head is tired. I am very glad you are coming to Rome, and I want to send you the address of a convent recommended to me as one at which several ladies have been very comfortable. I enclose a card of mine as an introduction, and you might write at once.

"With love from Maria, who is busily arranging the drawing-rooms.

"I remain, dear M.,

"Yours affectionately,

"J. MERRY DEL VAL."

"DEAR M.,

"Wy ar well. Butiful wetter, quiett warm.
16 vomme, 8 Schatter.

"Your

"ELISABETH.

"Abbazia, le 14th January, 1896."

I had given the Archduchess a very pretty blue vase. She had seen it packed for the journey to Abbazia with many misgivings lest it be broken, and she hastened to inform me of its safe arrival.

"CHÈRE M.,

"Merci bien pour votre lettre. The blue vase isnt broken. Hee is an my teble. Vn i go too the tennis i am varey happy. I have vary nys roses an my table. Ven chell y get my kard for the filipine ? Wy have beatiful wetter y have bin at the see in a bot.

"Whyt many kisses,

"Your

"ELISABETH.

"Abbazia, den 19th January, 1896."

The Archduchess indulged in the most astonishing taste in ~~the~~notepaper imaginable—vivid green, pink, or

blue; her monogram surmounted by the Imperial Crown embossed in silver, and a huge red seal: "Der Frau Erzherzogin Elisabeth," made a startling addition to one's morning post.

She never forgot a promise when it was made to her. At times this was inconvenient, but it taught one not to make them lightly to her. I had eaten a philopena with her, over a double nut, and had promised to (paint her a card,) which I did later.

"Hofburg, Vienna.

"*January 22nd, 1896.*

"MY DEAREST VER,

"Just a few lines to tell you what I am doing. Last night I dined with the Badenis, Count, Countess, and Wanda—quite like old times—and we went to the Opera. Madame Zaliscka, the wife of the Minister of Agriculture, whom I have not seen since they visited the Badenis at Büsk, was in the box, and Countess Fanny Larrish went too. The latter is a niece of the famous or infamous Countess who was so deeply implicated in that tragic affair of the Crown Prince at Meyerling. Of course, she is never allowed in Vienna now. The 'Ballet of Excelsior' was so dazzlingly gorgeous that my eyes ache still from the light. I cannot tell you how kind the Badenis are to me. Every week they invite me, and this week twice.

"I am, dearest Ver,

"Ever your loving,

"M."

Card from Countess Coudenhove, January 22nd, 1896:

"Thank you very much, dear Miss —, for having made my commission. My dear Vienna is a little muddy; I am sorry for that. I am very glad that you made the acquaintance of my good and dear aunt. We have splendid days. I should very much enjoy it to make great walks with you. The little one is very much with her mother and M. Louise, and is very fatigued of it. The child speaks often of you and likes you very much. Please don't be lonely.

"Yours truly,
"E. C."

"Abbazia, January 23rd, 1896.

"MY DEAR M.,

"I fank you verry much for the yerry nice kard, it made me such a pleger, it stends on my table! The wetter is biutiful sins wy ar hear no rean alwys sans chein and hot.
sunshine

"Your affectionette
"ELISABETH."

"Telegram N 5255.

"Miss —, Wien Hofburg.

"Wien fr. Abbazia, 1276. 48 9 25.

"Many carriages are at the station, every day we await you, mercredi morning ship goes at 7 in the morning, jeudi i don't go to Vienna at all, Archduchess

wishes very much that you come sooner to-morrow morning or Mardi evening please.

“Telegram. COUDENHOVE.”

“Hofburg, Vienna.

“*Monday.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“I leave Vienna to-day, spend two days with the Archduchess in Abbazia, and then go on to Rome, where I shall arrive on Friday morning. It is an awful journey and the visit to the Archduchess makes it so long, but one must pay for the smiles of Royalty. I have lots to do, as I only got the telegram to go at 12 p.m. last night. I was in bed asleep and they woke me up with it.

“Fondest love from

“M.”

I arrived at Abbazia on the 28th of January. The Archduchess seemed delighted to see me, and I spent two days walking, painting, and amusing her. Upon one of our walks I noticed that she did not return the salutes and bows of the people. “It is not right, Archduchess,” I remonstrated. “I know you get tired of it, but you must remember these people feel that in a measure you belong to them.” She did not reply, and we walked in silence for a time. Climbing a rocky promontory, we came suddenly upon an old parish priest. With a look of deep and respectful interest he removed his broad-brimmed clerical hat



ABBZIA.

and saluted her. To my unbounded astonishment, the Archduchess went close up to him in the rocky road and made a deep Court curtsy. The amazement of the poor old curé may be better imagined than described, and as we passed on, leaving him gazing open-mouthed after us, I shook with silent laughter, but the Archduchess regarded me solemnly out of her pretty eyes, and asked gravely :

“ Well, now are you satisfied ? ”

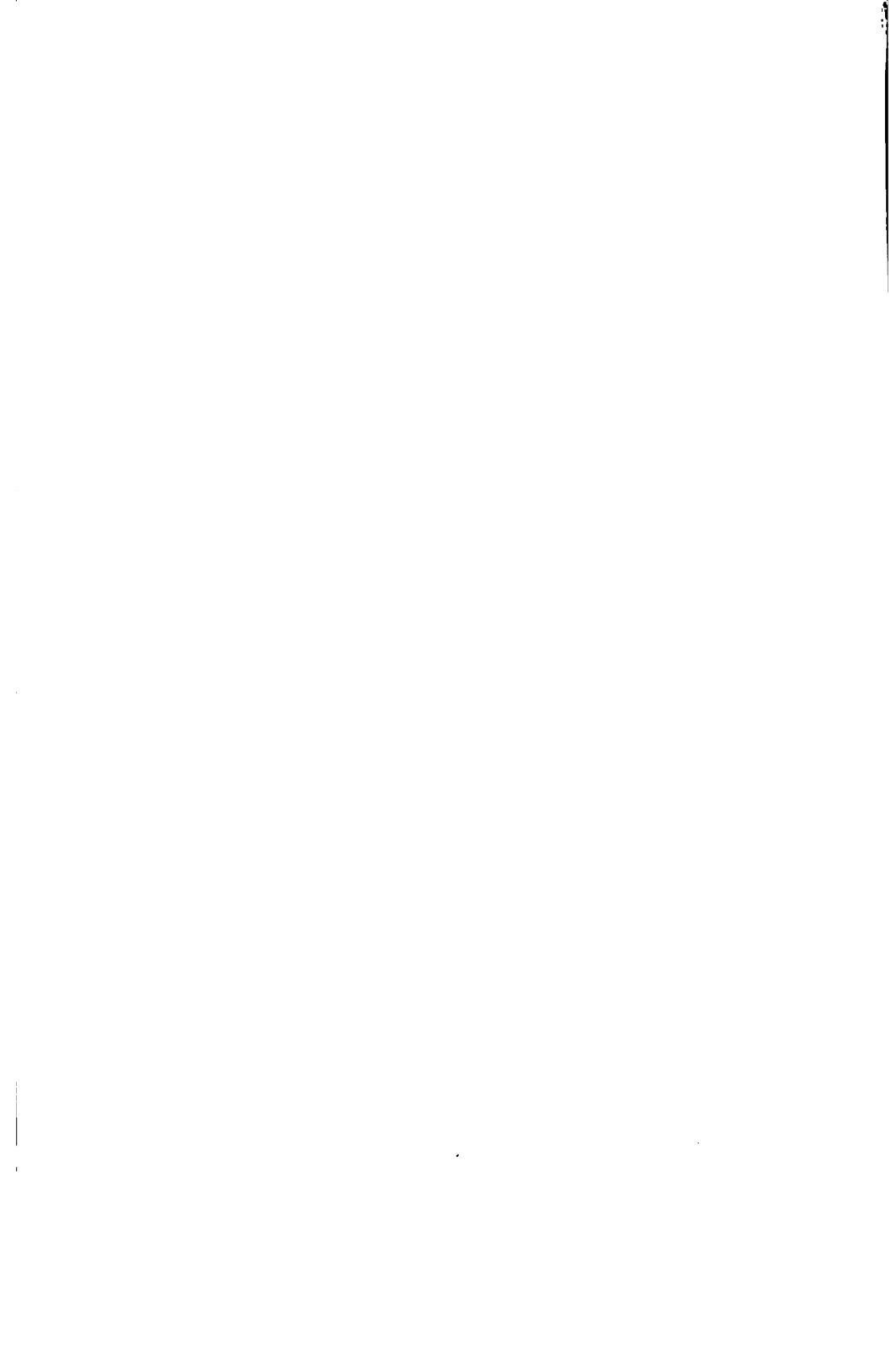
I was sorry that Princess Louise had come to Abbazia, as I felt that her presence would add to the Crown Princess Stephanie's difficulties, and I heard enough from the other ladies-in-waiting to know that she was far from a reformed character ; her escapades with Mattachich were quite as blatant as they had been in Vienna. However, as every person of consequence refused to recognize her, we could only hope that her stay might be short.

The Archduchess would scarcely let me out of her sight, and I had all my meals with her, a pleasure not wholly undiluted, as it caused so much jealousy amongst the suite that I was glad to be safely upon my way to Rome. Before I left, the Crown Princess Stephanie sent for me and charged me to see the then Pope, Leo XIII., and tender him her homage. She desired his influence exerted for her at the Austrian Court. She was very unhappy there, and as the Pope had been Nuncio to the Belgian Court in former years, she felt he might be inclined to favour her. Stephanie was most unpopular with the Austrians ;

they regarded her in the light of a parvenue, and she had practically no friends, her only intimate at that time being the Baroness Boranistza, formerly an American girl named Price, who had married an Hungarian noble.



CAFFIGIOLA AT ST. PIETRO DI SIEVE, A FLORENTINE CASTLE OF THE MEDICI, NOW THE SUMMER RESIDENCE OF THE
DUKE OF ROMARIGO.



CHAPTER XVII

“Via del Babuino, Rome.

“*February 2nd, 1896.*

‘MY DEAREST VER,

“You see I am really here. I spent two very happy days at Abbazia with the Archduchess. She was charming, as pleased to see me as possible. I had a very fair journey and a warm welcome here. I spent to-day with the Marchioness Malvezzi and I lunch on Thursday at the Spanish Embassy. I am so glad to see my friends here and get a little rest and freedom from the responsibility in Vienna. Please write soon, as it is some time since I heard from you.

“With fondest love from

“M.”

I was delighted to be in my beloved Rome once more, and nothing could have exceeded the kindness showered upon me on all sides by my good friends. One of my first visits was paid to the Reverend Mother Raparatrice. This convent is famous for its exquisite singing, and also for the beautifully artistic blue and white robes of the nuns. I went about in society a good deal with Miss Merry del Val, the Ambassador's

only daughter. She was a lovely girl, with a most winning manner. When she was small and at the Viennese Court, the Empress Elizabeth said she had the most lovely eyes she had ever seen.

This season the complications in Roman society, where the most rigid line is drawn between the two factors, viz., the Black or Papal Party and the White or Quirinal Party, were enhanced by the presence in Rome of the daughters of Don Carlos, the Spanish Pretender. That none of the *personnel* of the Spanish Embassy should meet them had been sternly directed by Queen Christine, the then Regent. Consequently, even in the middle of a dance, Miss Merry del Val or her brother were obliged to leave immediately if either of the Princesses entered the ball-room. It spoilt many of the best balls of the season, as the Princesses were visiting their aunt, the Princess Massino, who was a *grande dame* of the Black Party.

Of the very many interesting people whom I met in Rome on this happy holiday, to me one of the most amusing was the Dowager Duchess Salviati. But some years later, when I went to live with her daughter, the Duchess of Bomargo, and came in daily contact with the old Duchess, I found that, what in Society seemed to me a piquant sauce, was much more like an excessive irritant. Although she was of the French family of FitzJames, direct descendants of James II. and Arabella Churchill, that did not make her at all English in her sympathies. As a matter of fact, she abhorred all the English.



THE ROYAL GOVERNESS AT THE SPANISH EMBASSY, ROME.

She was, of course, a devout Catholic, and her good works were many. A children's hospital she maintained entirely by her own and what outside subscriptions she could obtain. (Chiefly these were got from English and American visitors to Rome.) Most diplomatically she made her English antipathies subservient to her interest in her hospital until she saw whether the unsuspecting fish would swallow the bait. But alas for the unwary ones who became not subscribers but who remained within range of her vitriolic abuse !

The one English person who seemed immune from her attacks, and in whom she entirely overlooked the stigma of his English birth, was Archbishop Stonor, who occupied a unique position in Rome. Although thoroughly English, he was the adviser, friend and confidant of many of the great Roman families, and I was always delighted to be present at any entertainment he honoured with his presence ; he lent such dignity to the name of England that I felt a thrill of pride to be his compatriot.

Of the Malvezzis, with whom I had spent such a pleasant time the summer before, I saw much : dined, drove out with them, and painted with the girls. I received frequent letters from the Archduchess, and she did not allow me to forget the philopena card I had promised to paint for her.

“DEAR M.,

“Venc jou vor yor lettre. Wy ar well.

Missis Wilczek gos tou Rom. Dora is heer. Have yoo seen de Holly Fater? The wetter is beautiful and warm. Dont yoo feind tet i have had a rathe reiting? Wen koms the pantyng? I am verry kuiorius. I have realy no thrime too reit.

“Your

“ERZSI.”

Alas! the English made me shiver, but it was an improvement over what it had been six months before, which was at least some encouragement.

“Via del Babuino, Rome.

“DEAR A.,

“As you see, I am in Rome, but, alas! not for long, as my holiday is curtailed, and I am to go to Abbazia for service the 8th of March. The Archduchess is so fond of me that I cannot stay away so long. Of course this is satisfactory, as she writes to me nearly every day, and one sees she really does not forget me, but I am very disappointed for my dear Rome. The weather here is lovely, and yesterday I went to some races, which I found very tiresome, but everyone else seemed to enjoy them. I never cared for races and I have had to see so many! There is plenty of Carnival here for those who like it. How do you like the story of Ferdinand the Apostate? He is uncle of our little Princess Dora of Coburg, you know. Of course it is bad for the people who are Catholics in his country, and it will end in being very bad for him. His wife has gone somewhere near you. She



Dear May!

Uem jou vor for
letter. Wy ar well
kissis Wilczek
gos tou Rom.

Dora is heer. have
you seen de Holy
Fater? Che wetter

In a later letter to my sister I find :

"I hear Boris was in Vienna, and says : 'I am Crown Prince and Orthodox.' The stupid little parrot is only three."

"Abbazia,

"November 17th, 1896.

"DEAR M.,

"Ho is your fut ? And wy don't you ret my it is nôté (naughty !). I leuf you so much and you dont leik my a little, J no it ! Venne you are with Merry del Val you dont fink at us, its not nice my good M—— ! Yesterday wy var wive de yot von Baron Rodsceild. it was leuvly ! Vy were werry far in the Canal Mal-Tempa and in Bukari and Porta-Ré ! The wetter is butyful haolvys. Vif manny kisses,

"From your

"ERZSI.

"P.S.—Plys gif my your addresse ? Y cant rid your ryting !" *

* "DEAR M.,

"How is your foot ? And why don't you write to me ? It is so naughty. I love you so much and you don't like me a little. I know it ! When you are with the Merry del Vals you don't think of us, and it's not nice, my good M—— ! Yesterday we were with the yacht of Baron Rothschild. It was lovely ! We were far in the Canal Mal-Tempa and in Bukari and Porta-Ré. The weather is beautiful always. With many kisses,

"From your,

"ERZSI.

"P.S.—Please give me your address. I cannot read your writing !"



THE ROYAL GOVERNESS AND MISS MERRY DEL VAL IN THE VATICAN GARDEN.

I was soon to hear other and more graphic accounts of this expedition of the Crown Princess on the Baron Rothschild's yacht. The Emperor was very displeased indeed with the Crown Princess, and after that, forbade her having the Royal ensign raised when she went on any of the boats. It was a pity, as it was so pretty to see all the salutes, but the Emperor, while gentle, even weak in instances, can be very firm, and in view of the political situation then in Austria it was most inconsiderate of the Princess Stephanie.

When I left the Convent St. Maria Raparatrice, I found that once more the plans of the Archduchess's suite had been changed. Madame Touzet had recovered from her indisposition sufficiently to go to Abbazia, so I did not go there, and would not have to return to Vienna until the end of March. Madame was generally ill, and, from what I could hear at this time, quite unfit for service, but she clung to her position near the Archduchess with the utmost tenacity and was very jealous of other influences.

On the 3rd of March I attended a reception at the Spanish Embassy. All the traditional Spanish grandeur was observed at these entertainments.

To begin with, even for Rome, that city of palaces, the Embassy was particularly fine, built in Spanish style, with lovely fountains playing constantly in the court. The entrance is especially imposing. The carriages come under the *porte cochère*, and

immensely wide staircases lead, on either side, up to the reception rooms. Beautiful carvings adorn these staircases and statues of celebrated medieval Spaniards are placed at intervals.

On the occasion of a reception, the Spanish Embassy being accredited to the Holy See, the Cardinals are received with all the state and splendour Spain has lavished upon the Church for ages past. The staircases are brilliantly illuminated, and when a Cardinal's carriage is announced and his Eminence steps forth, gorgeous in his magnificence of Cardinal purple, the train of his robe carried by little pages, he is met by lackeys dressed in the red and yellow livery of the Spanish Court, holding torches high in the air. They at once place themselves two in front and two at each side of the Cardinal, and in this order the little procession mounts the broad stairs. In the courtyard the falling spray of the fountains catches and tosses again in iridescent reflections the light from the flaring torches. The brilliant red, yellow and crimson are harmonized by the gleaming softness of the old Italian marble and the mellow whiteness of the frost-like lace upon the Cardinal's sleeves, and now and again, as he treads his stately and ceremonious way, one catches a flash of hidden fire from the jewelled cross upon his breast or the ring upon his finger.

Cardinal Rampolla was magnificent when he participated in this little pageant. He was a man of striking personality and showed his aristocratic birth



From a sketch in chalk.

CARDINAL MACCHI.

in every lineament of his features, and he fitted well into a picture such as a painter would have loved. Cardinal Vannutelli also made a striking appearance.

At the top, the Ambassador met his illustrious guests with deep reverences of welcome and led them to the place of honour in the *salon*. The noblest houses of Italy are represented at these receptions, and the Borghese, the Colonna, Massimo, Antici, Albani (all Princely families), and other names which have made history, are to be heard.

Cardinal Macchi was a guest, and a few days later, in a convent near the Nervi Fountain, Cardinal Macchi said the Mass. His sister is a nun of the order of the Ladies of Zion, and she was very kind to me. After the Mass I had the great honour to be introduced to him.

“Via del Babuino, Rome.

“*March 9th, 1896.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“I am sorry you should be anxious about me here. Of course, there was a good deal of rioting last week, and the approaches to the street where Crispi lives were packed with soldiers, and everyone expected a revolution. The authorities dispersed the mob in rather ignominious fashion, by having out the fire engines and hoses and playing water on them, but it was very effective. After the war of 1870, when Victor Emmanuel took Rome away from the Pope and shut him up a prisoner in the Vatican,

they took sixty cannons from the Holy Father and gave them as a present to their then friends, the Abyssinians. It was with these guns that they have been defeated now! Fortunately the mob is against the King and Government, so we in convents are safe. The worst day was Thursday, and the King's Party set about a report that the Holy Father was dead, and tried to get the mob to attack the Vatican. I really saw little of it except once or twice, and you know I do not object to a row and a little new experience. I am to have my audience with the Holy Father next week. I need not be back in Vienna until about the 25th. I will write again soon.

“Ever your loving,

“M.”

It was growing more and more difficult to get a private audience with Pope Leo XIII., as he was by now a very old man and extremely frail. However, through Monseigneur Merry del Val, then Private Secretary, I received my ticket. I drove to the Vatican for the Pope's Mass at nine o'clock in the morning. I dressed in a plain black silk dress, with a beautiful Spanish lace mantilla covering my head, the long ends falling down my back, and my face uncovered. No other head-covering is permitted. Immediately after the Mass, Monseigneur Merry del Val presented me to the Holy Father. I knelt humbly before this fragile little man, so radiantly white, cassock, cape, cap and skin, his silvery hair forming

almost a halo round his delicate, ascetic face, and kissed a jewel in his splendidly embroidered and bejewelled shoe. This is the ceremony known as

Dear Miss F. X. I send you
a book which you may find
Mgr. Merry del Val
useful, I need hardly add.
I think, that I shall be most
happy to do all I *Valencia*
can to

help you during yr. stay,
and that you need not
trouble to apply.

A NOTE TO THE AUTHOR FROM CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL, WRITTEN ON
A VISITING CARD.

“Kissing the Pope’s toe.” As I knelt in front of His Holiness, Monseigneur Merry del Val explained to him my business. The Pope was very interested in what I had to say of the Archduchesses, and

expressed deep sympathy for Stephanie and Elizabeth, remarking that the pity of them left widowed and orphaned so young touched him deeply.

Of course, at this time the question of civil marriages was a burning one, and was making great difficulties between Austria and the Papal See. There was, in fact, a decided coolness and also grave misgivings in Austria as to the attitude of the Vatican in connection with the anti-Semitic policy. Therefore it was with additional graciousness and condescension that the Holy Father listened to my request. This question of civil marriages was the result of the abuse of priestly privileges, inasmuch as no marriage was legal unless performed by a Roman Catholic priest, and, of course, marriage being a sacrament, the priest had the right to insist upon confession before he would celebrate the ceremony.

This was intolerable to Protestants and Free-thinkers, and in various parts of the country whole villages were dispensing with the marriage ceremony, and in consequence were cut off from the Church and from legal privileges as well. It was a most serious situation; for first in Hungary, where half the population is Protestant, and then in Austria, determined efforts were being made to have civil marriage without any religious ceremony whatever.

The Emperor, who, though the soul of goodness, has a great weakness for popularity—he loves to be loved—at first remained staunchly with the Church,



Photo by Alessandri, Rome.

HIS MAJESTY HUMBERT, KING OF ITALY.

[between pp. 190 and 191.]



Photo by Alessandri, Rome.

HER MAJESTY MARGHERITA, QUEEN OF ITALY.

[between pp. 190 and 191.]

but when he found public opinion too strong for him, he gave way and countenanced civil marriage, with the regrettable result that he was in bad odour at the Vatican. Of course, this was most undesirable for both. When I had received the blessing, the Pope extended his hand, and I kissed the huge emerald which he wore in a ring for that purpose. Monseigneur Merry del Val, tall, dark, handsome and young, stood quietly behind the Holy Father's chair, his simple black cassock edged with purple, a strong background against which the little white figure of His Holiness Leo XIII. shone out in cameo-like relief, and I wondered—would I kneel to him some time in the dim future ?

Ans: No. [1933]

CHAPTER XVIII

IT was with reluctance that I left my beloved Rome. However, my summons came and it was necessary that I should be in Vienna to greet my Royal charge upon her return from Abbazia. Leaving Rome about midnight, I arrived in Bologna at noon the following day. There I was met at the station by the Marquis Charles Malvezzi and a small party of friends, who had arranged a delightful luncheon for me, so the clouds of my regret were quickly dispelled by Italian sunshine and warm hospitality. The Marquis was one of that interesting and picturesque company, the Pope's Noble Guard.

On the 27th I arrived in Vienna, cold, tired, and lonely. There was an Imperial suite carriage at the station to meet me to be sure, but none of the ladies had taken the trouble to come with it. Arrived in the Hofburg, when ascending the stairs to my apartment I met the Countess Wanda Badeni coming down. She had been to see if I had returned. My heart warmed and I really think I was never more glad to see any person in my life. The Archduchess returned on Monday and my routine began again.

This being Holy Week, of course lessons were not resumed, and our time was spent at our devotions.

The Emperor is a very pious man, and many hours each day found him in the state seat in the Royal Chapel. This chapel, built about five hundred years ago, is in purely Gothic style, and the vistas of pillars and arches of grey stone, mellowed by age, are a joy to the eye. There are galleries, one above the other, to accommodate the Imperial Family and all their attendant suites, and at Easter, when everything is brightness and light, and the Court in gala attire, it is a brilliant spectacle. Each person attached to the entourage has his or her own place, but during Holy Week the gallery, where I usually sat, was given over to the statesmen and diplomats who joined the Emperor in his devotions at this season.

Luckily for me, I was "on duty" with the Archduchess, so with black silk dress, long black veil and black kid gloves, I sat at the back of her division, adjoining the Emperor's and separated only by a glass partition, and I could clearly see him throughout all the devotions, a solitary and pathetic figure kneeling, lonely and alone, following the service closely in his own little prayer book.

On Good Friday, although no ladies take part in the ceremony of the "Adoration of the Cross," Madame de Touzet and I were early in the Oratory. The Emperor, followed by the state officials, led the "Veneration," kneeling for his three genuflections

with grace and marvellous agility, notwithstanding his three score years, and with the deepest reverence he kissed the Cross. It was a most impressive ceremony, and one that left no doubt concerning the absolute piety of the aged Emperor.

On the evening of Holy Saturday, at four o'clock, we attended the Resurrection service. The chapel was almost in total darkness, and we were obliged to make our way stumblingly along the aisles to our appointed places as best we might from memory. There we knelt in the darkness. The resonant tones of a priest saying prayers in the Lady Chapel echoed strangely through the gloom; an occasional sigh behind or in front brought the realization that others, too, were present. Suddenly, from a distance, sounded the faint blare of trumpets; at the same moment the lights shone out, the entire east end shining in glorious radiance, dazzling eyes accustomed for three hours to the soft darkness.

The entire congregation rose as one person to their feet; a breathless silence, and again the triumphant Imperial fanfare, but this time closer. The Royal pages, in their gorgeous gala dress of rich crimson, lined the body of the church, and as the music of the trumpets sounded closer and closer a detachment of the gigantic Palace Guards appeared in full-dress uniform, their high busbies marking the dominant note of black in the assemblage, followed by their officers, splendid in graceful, cream-coloured cloaks, jewelled orders sparkling on their breasts, a magnificent

body of men ; and these were followed in turn by all the Church dignitaries attached to the Palace and Court, their splendid vestments making a very riot of colour. Next came the heralds, in their quaint costumes, blowing the Royal salute at intervals upon long golden trumpets, and finally, beneath the canopy, the four supports borne by four princes of the Empire, the Cardinal Archbishop walked, proudly bearing the monstrance flashing with magnificent jewels, within which rested Our Lord, returning to His chapel, now prepared for Easter.

Close behind marched the Emperor, surrounded by the Archdukes, the rays from the lighted candles falling softly on his silvery hair and eliminating many of time's and sorrow's traces in his dear old face. Reverently he knelt upon the altar steps, humbly bowing his white head as the Tabernacle was opened, and the escort of Archdukes dropped upon their knees behind him. The Benediction was given, the Tabernacle was closed, and the Emperor passed first out of the church. His Majesty was richly attired and his breast covered with glittering orders, but so touchingly religious was his attitude that, when I came to think of it later, it was only the devoutness of his expression that I could recall definitely.

On Easter Day we had magnificent music, all the great singers from the Opera taking part. I dined with the Archduchess and the Countess Coudenhove. At eight o'clock Mass on the Thursday morning before

Easter—Maundy Thursday—I had noticed twelve old men, whom I had never before seen. They wore large black cloaks, something like the Geneva gown. I was told that these were the twelve selected for the ceremony known as the “Washing of Feet,” which is carried out with much solemnity in Vienna, as it is in Madrid.

After Mass, they were given breakfast and brought into the large banqueting hall, where each was given a place near the long table. The Archbishop and many high Church dignitaries are present, besides all the Archdukes. The Archbishop reads prayers, whilst the Emperor, carrying a golden jug, and attended by Archdukes carrying a golden basin and fine towels, goes to each old man in turn. The Archduke places the basin under the feet of the old man, whilst the Emperor pours the water from the ewer over them. Then another Archduke dries the feet with the towels; and so on around the room. When this ceremony is completed the Archduke passes a dish of food to the Emperor who places it before the first recipient of his charity. Then another receives the same, until all twelve have been served with food by His Majesty. Money also is given. After this, the table is cleared by the Archdukes and the food, together with all the dishes, is packed up and given to (the lucky twelve) to be carried home with them.

It is necessary that each of these men be exactly the same age as the Emperor, (and of stainless char-

acter.) The honour is eagerly sought after by old soldiers and civil pensioners. I was told that for many years the Empress Elizabeth also took part in this ceremony, washing the feet of twelve old women, but when I was at the Austrian Court she had taken no part in any ceremony for many years.

The weather was often capricious at this season, and while one day we might pick violets in the Prater, the next, in all probability, would be cold and wet, so the Archduchess had to be amused indoors. Several times this led to embarrassing consequences for me. One day she persuaded me to get into the swing in her schoolroom in the Hofburg. It was one of those wretched, board-like affairs, which, unless one is very careful in descending, will twirl about and deposit one most ignominiously upon the floor. This creates much amusement for any chance spectators, but is very trying for the victim, and I never relished the prospect of any such entertainment for the suite at my expense.

But, as on this day, we were quite alone and the Archduchess promised to hold one rope when I wished to descend, I agreed to try the thing. I found it not too bad, and she was swinging me with great gusto when suddenly the door on the far side of the schoolroom was flung open and the Emperor strode in. Tableau! The Archduchess promptly forgot all about me, and there I swung like Mohammed's coffin, and the more I struggled to stop the thing—were I a man, that “thing” would have a prefix—

the more gyrations it seemed to make. The Emperor stared at me in complete amazement, and my face felt hot. I am sure I was perfectly scarlet. Finally the Archduchess recovered herself, and, seizing one rope, enabled me to scramble down in the most awkward and undignified fashion the wildest imagination could picture, and, with my knees trembling, I managed a curtsy, a curtsy the like of which had never been seen before at the Austrian Court and I trust may never be seen again. The Emperor looked at me, bowed gravely, but with twinkling eyes, and remarked dryly, "It is a little late, madam, for the curtsy," then strode through the room, his shoulders shaking with laughter, leaving me bobbing about, red as a turkey-cock and weak as a cat.

When the door had closed upon him, the Archduchess looked at me, and I looked at her, and we both crumpled up, helpless heaps of mirth. She was very loyal and never told the story. Of a certainty I did not, so it never reached the ears of the suite of stiff-laced automatons by whom we were surrounded, but always after when I saw the Emperor I fancied a twinkle of amusement in his eyes.

Shortly after this I met, for the first time, the Countess Rossi, a most interesting personality. She was a cousin of my kind and good friend, the Countess Karolyi, and, like all of that family, very pious. A daughter of Sonntag, the famous singer—perhaps, next to Jenny Lind, the most famous in the world—

and Count Rossi, who, while Prime Minister to Austria, died by the hand of an assassin, the Emperor gave her an apartment in that Royal Almshouse of Vienna—the Schotten Haus. All the ladies living there are, of course, poorer in purse than family, and the Royal warrant is for a sort of religious order with a head similar to the Royal Abbesses of the order at Prague. They are called the *Chanoinesses*, a title which if it existed in England would be canoness. I was charmed with the Countess and frequently visited her afterwards.

Our little Archduchess was not at all well at this time, and very full of whims. She usually dined in her own dining-room with either the Countess Coudenhove, Madame de Touzet, or me. She had a very small appetite and seemed to have inherited the Habsburg fear of being poisoned. Therefore, if perchance we passed any dish, she immediately became suspicious and, declaring it was poisoned, refused to touch it. Doctor Armanthaler insisted that we must eat of everything that was served. As I suffered severely from sick headaches at that time, I found the order sometimes very difficult to carry out.

One day, while dining, the Archduchess lifted her glass of wine to her lips; a light wine of exceptionally fine quality was always provided for her. Immediately she went quite white, became violently agitated, and declared vehemently it was poisoned. There was but one thing to do, and I did it. I seized the glass and drained it, recognizing at once

that it was a mistake and that brandy had been substituted for her wine. She was quite content when she saw I did not drop down dead, but my head was in a dreadful whirl all the afternoon.

Her Imperial Highness was full of quaint fancies, and frequently astounded me with some startlingly socialistic remark, which assuredly emanated from her own fertile brain, as all such matters were carefully kept away from her. One day she met me with the following speech :

“ I feel sure all archduchesses, princesses, duchesses, countesses and Fräuleins ” (this latter was to include me) “ are all exactly the same ! ” When I ventured to say that the difference was whether they were good or naughty, she shrugged her shoulders, and said poutingly, “ That’s just like you ! You are never contented ! ” I had not realized what a tremendous compliment she had intended to pay me.

Vienna was very gay at this season, and I was constantly invited to dine or lunch with some of my friends outside the Palace ; also the Opera was a source of pleasure to me. The Badenis were frequently inviting me, and as it did not in any way interfere with my duties to the Archduchess, I enjoyed the taste of Viennese society. After all these years it is amusing to me to read some of the entries in my diary.

Under April 22nd, 1896, I find :

Went to Confession. Find I must fight against

gossiping too much. Always getting into trouble, besides doing wrong.

April 23rd, 1896.

Worked downstairs in the Palace all day ; had no opportunity for gossip !

I think it would take a superhuman being to live in the Austrian Court and not gossip. It is a very hotbed of criticism. As I find no further references to this weakness of mine, I cannot think I overcame it so quickly, but more likely that I succumbed and talked and listened as readily as the others.

It was about this time that I caught my first glimpse of the Empress Elizabeth. It was a recognized fact that she visited her dislike of her dead son's wife upon their child, the little Elizabeth, to such an extent that she never voluntarily saw her granddaughter and never spoke to her if she did see her. We scarcely ever caught a glimpse of the Empress when she came to the Hofburg upon her extremely rare visits : she usually passed a few days there *en route* to the Castle of Lainz, but we knew that she was in the Palace by seeing her personal servants about, especially her bath and massage woman, who wore a very distinctive Hungarian costume.

The Castle of Lainz has a large park and model farm, and also large and delightful gardens. It adjoins Schönbrunn Castle, where the Emperor lives a great part of the year. In the summer, when the Empress was at Lainz, he dined nearly every

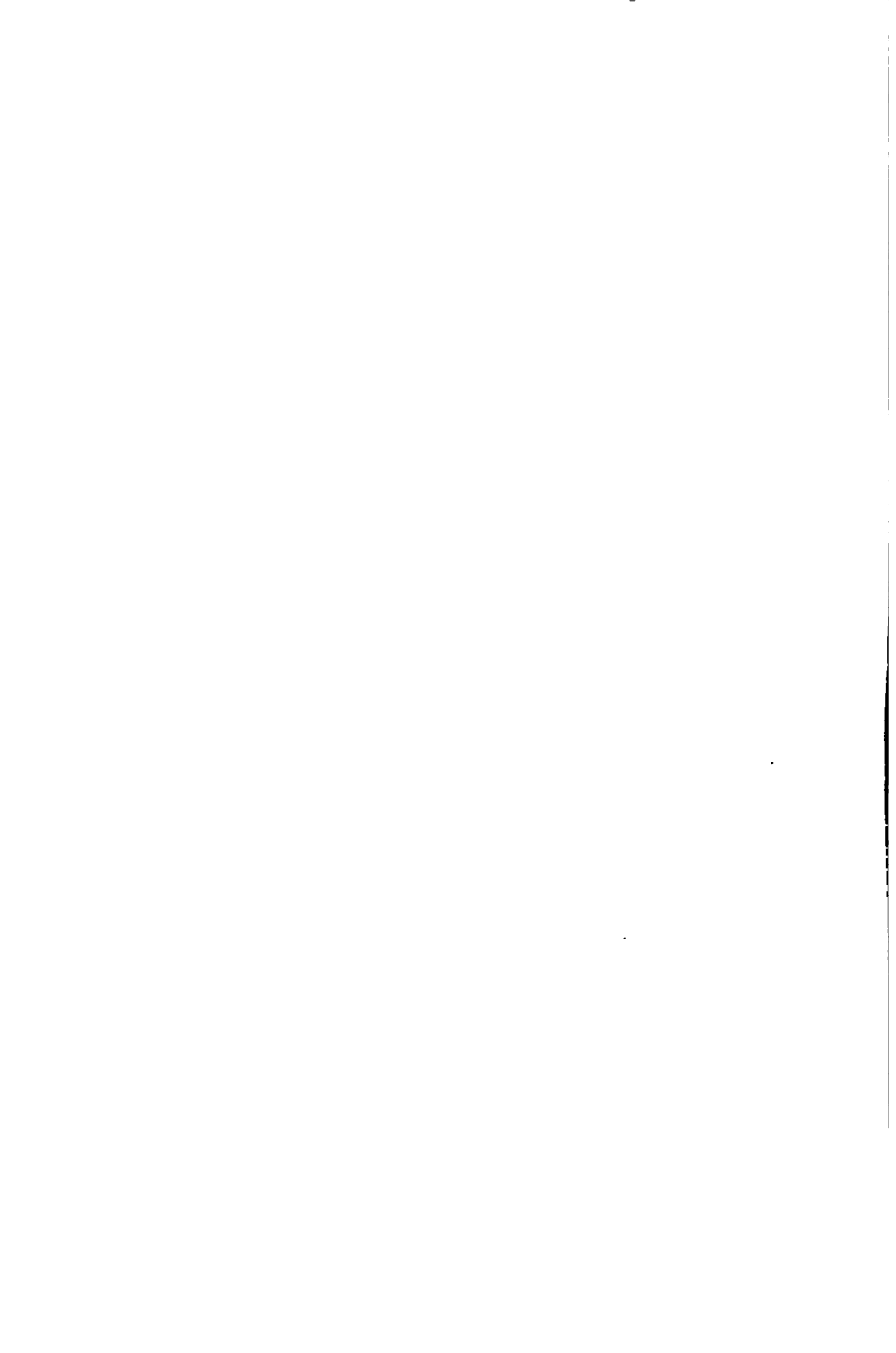
day with her, returning to Schönbrunn for the night. As Frau Schratt, the Emperor's faithful "friend," lived in a villa near Schönbrunn and Lainz, and the Empress pretended to a warm friendship for that buxom lady, it was an interesting trio of estates.

I frequently took the Archduchess to play in the great park round Schönbrunn, as, particularly in the springtime, the woods were charming. We would drive out and leave the carriage in some convenient spot which we could reach easily when our walk was finished. One delightful May day we went farther than usual and found ourselves at the Model Farm. The Archduchess was a little nervous, as she was not allowed to stray at will on the Lainz estate, but we were very interested in the cows. It was already growing dusk when we left the stables, and as we walked quickly down the Long Avenue, hastening our footsteps, suddenly, from between the trees, we discerned a figure advancing rapidly towards us, all in black and heavily veiled; it seemed to float along, scarcely touching the ground.

The Archduchess, in a panic, clung to me, gasping, "Grandmama!" I was so startled that I almost forgot to curtsy, but habit is stronger than fright, and with the encumbrance of the clinging child, I did my utmost. The Empress did not turn her head, but seemed to breathe a "Good day," and passed, a black wraith in the twilight. Had it not been for the Archduchess's nervous fright, I should really have doubted my own sight.



THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH.



The Archduchess Valerie, always most devoted to both her parents, also professed a deep friendship for her father's friend, and in the summer months little intimate picnics of four, viz., Emperor, Empress, Archduchess Valerie and Frau Schratt, were of frequent occurrence, but were not chronicled in the Court news. Upon one occasion the Emperor offered his granddaughter, Archduchess Elizabeth, a little dog. The Archduchess hesitated, as she was devoted to her own pet, a little dog called Pinkie, and could not decide to give him a rival. However, she was persuaded to accept her grandparent's gift, only to be informed that the Emperor had given the dog meanwhile to Frau Schratt !

The Emperor was a constant caller at the Schratt Villa, and almost any day his aide-de-camp might be seen walking up and down outside, awaiting His Majesty's pleasure to depart. Frau Schratt was said to read the daily papers to him, and there also he met the rich financiers who helped him so judiciously to invest his personal fortune, and whom, without Frau Schratt as intermediary, he would never have known.

On the 8th of May I had the great pleasure of a visit from Monsieur Alphonso Merry del Val, who, together with Monsignor the Prince de Croy, one of His Holiness's Partecipanti, and Count Carpegna of the Noble Guard, was accompanying Monsignor Agliardi, the Pope's representative, who was to be present at the coronation of the Emperor of Russia.

More than ever, Count Badeni was finding that his position of Prime Minister to Austria was far from being a sinecure. From the time that he made his first speech in the Parliament (Reichsrath) it was plainly seen that a statesman of high ability and resolute will now occupied the Premiership; and coming forward without being pledged to any party or nationality, he was entirely independent of party interests. His position depended upon the Emperor, who was known to have greater confidence in him than in any previous Minister, and he was such a strong man that it was hoped in official quarters he would find a solution for the difficulties tearing the vitals of the Empire, and once and for all time settle the language question.

I like to remember, when recalling the troubles which beset Count Badeni's path in the Reichsrath, that the same state of affairs had existed prior to his accession to office. The struggle centred around the question of the languages. There are eight distinct tongues spoken in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and but few of these are recognized by the Government or the Law Courts, German, of course, being the authorized language. The Bohemians were constantly agitating for the Czech tongue to be made equal with the German, at least in Bohemia, and the Czech party was persistent. The leader of the extreme German Nationalist Party was a truculent Jew named Wolff, who never lost an opportunity of insulting the Prime Minister.

Count Badeni made repeated efforts to induce both sides of the House to join in an endeavour to bring about a fair compromise between the conflicting claims of the nationalities. He always put his duty as an Austrian official before his inclinations as a man, and even in the case of his own countrymen, the Poles, who were far more loyal to the Government than the Bohemians, and with whom he, being a Pole, naturally sympathized in their desire to have the Polish language more universally used in Galicia, he never gave way one iota. Consequently he was much disliked by the less loyal members of the House, and the scenes in the Reichsrath (usually instigated by the German, Wolff) became disgraceful. Even the Sultan of Turkey pointed to the proceedings in the Vienna Chamber of Deputies as a warning to his own subjects against the introduction of Parliamentary institutions into the Ottoman Empire !

The bitter spirit which animated the German Opposition is well shown by this extract from the *Neue Freie Presse* :

“ The fact that they have for nearly two decades been deprived of all decisive influence on the conduct of Austrian policy has convinced the Germans that they can no longer dispense with guarantees for the undisturbed enjoyment of their national rights in the Empire. Whereas at one time they were the ruling race, they have now been driven back to this line of defence, which they will never surrender. On the

contrary, they will use every weapon, and fight to the very end to maintain their position."

The weapons consisted, in the House, of scurrilous epithets, of lids of the parliamentary desks and of paper pellets which were flung at the Ministers of the Crown.

At this time there was also much dissension amongst the students of the University, as it was thought unwise in view of the political situation to permit their wearing national colours in their hats. This edict was met, in the manner of University students abroad, by their declaring a strike. It amounted to nothing, but gave the police some extra work, and led to an amusing encounter between the Archduchess and a group of the students. We were walking in the Prater, when several of them—of course, not recognizing her—stopped us and demanded what were her colours! I was terribly frightened, and did not quite know what to do, but, luckily, I did nothing, for the Archduchess drew herself up with real royal dignity and replied, rather disdainfully: "Gold and black!" The students looked aghast for a second, for those are the Imperial colours, and then, guessing whom they had accosted, took to their heels and made off, and I heaved a sigh of relief, for what might easily have developed into an exceedingly ugly situation had been saved by the very *naïveté* of the Archduchess.

CHAPTER XIX

"Hofburg, Vienna,

"*May 19th, 1896.*

"MY DEAREST VER,

"Just a line to say we go at once to Laxenburg, on account of the death of the Archduke Charles Louis. We did not think he would die until yesterday. The agony began in the afternoon. The Emperor was telegraphed for, and returned at once from Pesth. The churches of Vienna were open all night for prayers for him. He died at 6.45 this morning. The Emperor was with him at four o'clock this morning, and he is backwards and forwards all day, his poor eyes all swollen and looking dreadful. We all love him so much that it is awful to see him like this. The Archduke was the Emperor's next brother and heir to the crown. Of course, we are all at once in black. My stupid milliner sent me a hat covered with crape; I soon sent it back.

"The eldest son of the Duke of Cumberland is also dying, a boy of sixteen.

"With best love,

"From

"M.

"P.S.—Perhaps I shall come home the middle of July."

The Archduke was a very pious man and had made a pilgrimage to Palestine. There he drank impure water and contracted typhus, which developed upon his return to Vienna. Forty-eight hours after his death, the body was brought at midnight to the Palace Chapel, to lie in state until the funeral, which was at four o'clock the next day.

In accordance with the stipulations in the Archduke's will, his body was not embalmed, neither was his heart removed, as is the custom of the Imperial Family. I was told that the funeral cortège was expected at midnight, and I had been watching for some time hidden behind the curtains of my window. I was growing weary and had almost decided to go to bed, as I was expected to rise very early in the morning, when out of the darkness which enveloped the Palace I was startled by a wide shaft of light falling upon the grey east wall of the courtyard, and a gigantic shadow of a man's figure, draped and with outstretched arm, moved slowly up the illuminated space.

The effect was bewildering, so suddenly did it appear, and my mind had barely time to grasp the fact that it was merely a shadow of the colossal statue of the Emperor Francis Ferdinand which stands in the centre, when the whole Inner Court was illuminated from the flare of torches borne by the escort of the Archduke's body as they passed through the gateway.

Silently under my window they passed. Spectres they might have been for any noise that was made ; although over a hundred persons and perhaps twenty

horses crossed the courtyard, not a sound could be heard. The soldiers wore felts over their boots, and one only knew that they were walking because one saw the movements by the light from the yellow flare of the torches. The plumed hearse came like a phantom vehicle, the wheels padded, and drawn by horses in long black blankets and hoods, only great round holes for their eyes, and their shoes well muffled; the mounted escort the same. It was a sight which, I believe, might turn the brain were one to witness it unprepared.

The next day the Archduke lay in state in the 'Burg Chapel Oratory; his head and face were exposed, and his body wrapped in the Austrian flag. The smell from the faded flowers and the burning candles was horribly unpleasant, and I might mention the unembalmed body in addition, and I got such a headache I thought I could not stand it until the funeral started. But I managed to endure it all, and then went directly to my rooms and to bed.

Early next morning I was up and packing, as we were to leave Vienna by noon, which we did, and arrived in Laxenburg in a dreadful thunderstorm; this, added to the fact that all our spirits were greatly depressed by reason of the recent death and the deep mourning we were obliged to put on, plunged the Archduchess and her entire suite into the depths of misery.

Laxenburg is at all times damp, and it now reeked with dampness. All that night, I remember, I lay

the church and castle at Laxenburg faced one another, the procession was a very short one this year, and while everything was beautiful and most reverential, it lacked the splendour which accompanies the same pageant in Vienna. The Royal salute was fired from the Fortress as the priests and Emperor left the church, and cannon continued to boom as the procession passed into the courtyard of the Palace.

As all the people knelt at the altar erected there, one could distinguish above the crowd the Emperor's white head devoutly bent. Franz Josef never forgets his descent from the several saints of the Habsburg family. Both Saint Elizabeth and Saint Maximilian are amongst his ancestors.

We had an unobstructed view of the procession from the balcony in front of the Palace, as no ladies now take part in it. For many years the Empress Elizabeth accompanied the Emperor, and she was attended by the ladies of the Court, all dressed in magnificent costumes, but since she ceased to take any share or interest in the Imperial life all the Court ladies were precluded from participation in it.

This same day I received a letter from my sister Lily telling me of her engagement. I recounted my bit of news to the little Archduchess, who took the greatest possible interest in all the members of my somewhat numerous family, and she was greatly excited.

The next day she left for Buda-Pesth with other members of the Royal Family to attend the Hungarian

Millennial (the Court mourning for the Archduke being suspended for four days on account of this celebration), the one thousandth anniversary of the date when the Magyars (as the Hungarians love still to call themselves) came into Europe under Arpad. The Royal Family, including the Empress, and the Government officials, attended in state. The Archduchess seemed, however, to be far more concerned with the news of my sister's betrothal than with all the splendours of the "Banderinea," and suddenly espying Wanda Badeni in the crowd of officials' families, she leaned over the edge of the Royal box and called out shrilly, "Lily is engaged!" Everyone was asking everyone else who was Lily. As the Emperor's granddaughter and the daughter of the Prime Minister were so excited at the news, it was evident that she was a person of great importance!

The Archduchess told me that she had seen Wanda and knew she would want to know, but I had no idea of the furore created until I saw Wanda later in the autumn. In about a week I had the following letter from Wanda:

"MY DEAR M.,

"I send you only a few lines to tell you how pleased I was to hear from the Archduchess Elizabeth that your sister Lily is engaged! I congratulate you heartily and hope to know soon something more about this happy event! I think that will decide

you to go to England during your holidays—perhaps even you will be able to be present at the wedding. We spent three days in Pesth, which I enjoyed very much indeed; the society is extremely nice—the exhibition very interesting. The ‘Banderinea’ was magnificent. I never saw, and probably I will never see again, anything so beautiful. The costumes, the horses, the whole *mise en scène* was simply wonderful. I quite believe that there will be after this show off many bankrupt people!

“We enjoy much the peaceful country life. I have just finished ‘A Beginner,’ and intend to read now ‘A Tramp Abroad,’ by Mark Twain. I wonder if you know it? On the 25th of this month we are going to Lemberg for the races, then we come back, and do not move until autumn.

“I hope you received my last letter written still in Vienna.

“With best love,

“Believe me,

“Yours affectionately,

“WANDA BADENL

“Büsk, 15th June, 1896.”

Many a good laugh have I had over the mystification of all the “would-be” hangers-on of Royalty, who were at their wits’ ends to guess who “Lily” was, each pretending to the other that they were perfectly aware of this important alliance announced from the “seats of the mighty” by the Archduchess!

I had begun to feel that my sense of humour was being strangled, but it was quickly resuscitated when I heard Wanda's account of the scene.

Later this same month the Archduchess began swimming lessons at Laxenburg. Her teacher was a sergeant who was instructor of his company. He gave orders, "Eins, zwei, marsch!" exactly as though he were commanding his soldiers. This was, indeed, a novelty to the Archduchess, and though sometimes the colour would rush into her cheeks, she never resented his authority, and soon learned to swim very well indeed. The swimming bath was a luxurious affair, built by the late Prince Rudolph, for whom nothing seemed too grand. It was only used by the Imperial Family, but the little Archduchess worried until I was given permission to go with her. A little wooden chalet had been built in the grounds for her, and she loved to have her lessons there. It was so damp at Laxenburg that I vividly remember several severe attacks of rheumatism due to my waiting about for her in this summer-house. It was a pretty place, there is no denying, and the swallows used to fly in and out of the unglazed windows.

This spring, I suppose because it was so wet, they seemed late in nesting, and, to the Archduchess's delight, a pair began building in the rafters. She was greatly interested, and far preferred watching them to applying herself to her work. But one day there was a funeral in the village, and the bells of the Castle church tolled solemnly. This seemed to

frighten the birds and abruptly they flew away. After a little, she said very gravely : " Do you mind stopping the lesson, as I want to pray ? "

I concealed my astonishment as well as I could, and, with a gravity equalling her own, gave the required permission. She went over to a corner and knelt down for a few minutes, after which she rejoined me and we proceeded with our lessons. In the meantime, the funeral over, the bells ceased tolling, the park was restored to its normal quiet, and the swallows, chirping and twittering, came fluttering back to go on with their task, and the Archduchess was so pleased.

" I prayed that they would come back," she exclaimed delightedly. " They have only been to the funeral ! "

The weather continued hot and sultry, interspersed with violent electric storms, and it was thought advisable to send the Archduchess for a change. Her mother, the Crown Princess Stephanie, decided to go also, and as King Leopold of Belgium had never seen his granddaughter, it was decided to take her to Brussels, and then to Spa for the mountain air and waters. However, the visit was not a success, as the day they arrived in Belgium the old king left his capital for Paris, having no wish to become either reconciled to his daughter with whom he had quarrelled, or acquainted with his grandchild whom he had never seen—amiable man ! Their stay was of short duration ; the Archduchess was extremely

bored and returned to Laxenburg cross and tired, not at all benefited by her change. It was then decided to go at once to Mürzsteg, the Emperor's castle in the Styrian Alps. I, of course, went with the Archduchess, and it was my first really Royal journey.

Heretofore I had travelled with the suite in a special carriage, but on this journey we had an extra train and a special saloon carriage for the Archduchess and myself. Mürzsteg is high among the mountains beyond the Semmering Pass, which is considered the most beautiful scenery in Europe. Just before I left Vienna I received the following letter from Madame Merry del Val. I had decided to change my confessor and had written to that effect.

“ Villa Zinza,

“ San Sebastian, Spain.

“ *July 25th, 1896.*

“ MY DEAR M.,

“ I was looking for your letter, and accordingly it arrived very shortly after we did. Thank you, my dear, for being so punctual. I was wondering what you were doing, and behold ! you were in bed. I am so sorry for this illness, and very, very grateful to the dear little Archduchess for her affection towards you. The mountain air seems the very thing you need, and I hope it may do you much good. We have our usual home here and the same servants, so

all is easy. The Queen (Queen Christine) held her usual reception at the 'Rath-Haus' just two days after we came. I think no more interesting Royal group exists than that formed by the Queen, with her son (now dressed in uniform) and the two Infantas, who have chairs to the Queen's left, lower down. The eldest, or rather the Princess of Asturias, is grown into such a sweet and pretty girl. The Queen looks pale and thin, and rather sad, as is natural, considering her anxieties; the King (Alphonso) has grown, and looks well, though, of course, he is not *robust* in aspect. He is quite well.

"We had Holy Communion from the Pope's Hand on 4th, no 5th, of July. His Holiness was so well, and talked at length, though he was fasting. 'Let us sit down,' he said, when after Mass we knelt at his feet, 'for we are all fasting.' He scolded me affectionately for being anxious as to Mongr.'s holiday, saying I ought to trust the Pope, and that it would be given in August. I hope so, only I don't rejoice to read in the papers that in that month an Anglo-American pilgrimage will reach Rome. The pilgrims to the Holy Father will want an interpreter, but perhaps they won't stay beyond the 15th.

"Our son, Alphonso, is here. He had a great deal to tell of his Russian trip. It is a pity about Fr. Kolb; it seems so, at least. But, perhaps, someone may replace him that can do even better than he in French. There are such S. Js. in Austria, and I always thought F. Kolb's French less good than

that of three or four others I could name, and, as you say, you can get other advice if only your Archduchess gets what is best for her !

“ Now, I must stop for to-day, my dear M. You will let me hear how you are. Have you seen the Papal Encyclical, I wonder ?

“ Yours affectionately,

“ J. M. DEL V.”

It was, indeed, what I needed, this clear mountain air ; but while it braced me in a certain way, it brought colds and rheumatism in its trail, and the first night I slept—or rather did not sleep—at Mürzsteg I was almost frantic with neuralgia from one of my teeth. Of course, no dentist was at hand, so the suite doctor endeavoured to pull it for me. Whether he was particularly inexpert, or whether my tooth was exceptionally firmly rooted, I do not know, but I find recorded in my diary that, “ Six times he pulled. I was very bad after, and went to bed at 5 p.m.”

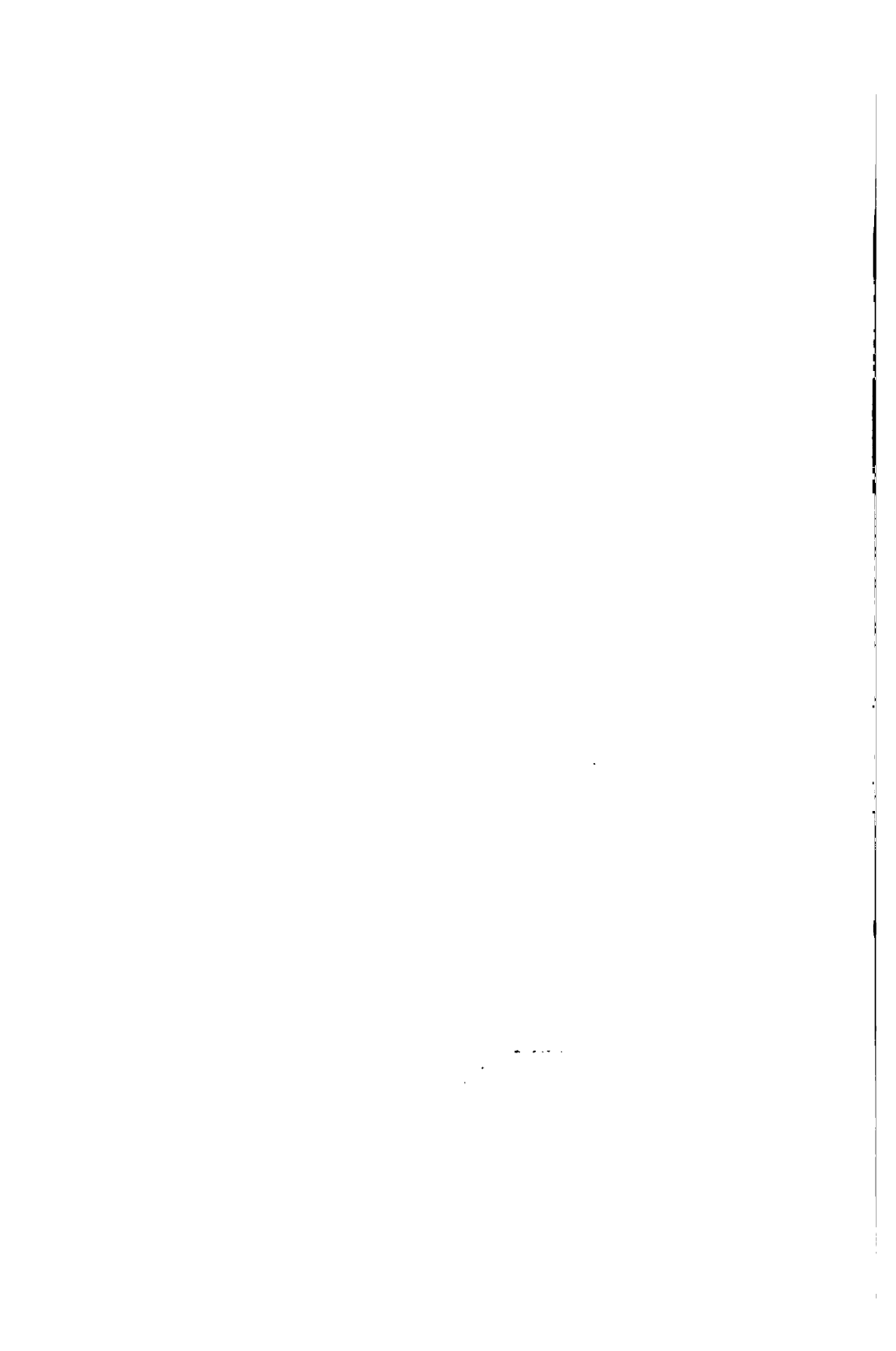
Mürzsteg is nearer to Maria Zell, the famous miraculous shrine, or Gnadenaltar, than is Vienna, although even from here the journey is quite tedious enough. This shrine is not near a railway, and is almost inaccessible in bad weather. The ordinary pilgrims take the journey on foot, a journey necessitating several days' travel ; it is, therefore, more select than most Gnadenaltars, and, in consequence, dear to the hearts of the Austrian aristocracy. The

Countess proposed making the pilgrimage from Mürzsteg, and I at once fell in with the project.

We left at 4 a.m., and made a slow and tiresome jolting journey over a short railway line. Then we had a carriage drive of over seven hours to reach Maria Zell. The weather was superb. The carriage was fairly comfortable and the horses, of which we had several relays, were excellent ; but to sit beside the Countess for seven hours at a stretch was a penance, indeed, and although I find recorded in my diary that "we were all well disposed," that was only because I would not quarrel with her. She prayed fervently for a time ; grumbled violently about everything she could think of, then talked to me a little until she was tired, and then prayed again. I did pretty much the same, and thus we proceeded to the shrine. As we ascended the mountain we noticed many small black crosses, which marked the spots where pilgrims, wearily toiling up the steep ascent, had slipped and fallen, making indeed a long pilgrimage from whence there is no returning, staff and shell adorned. At one spot we came upon a row of these little crosses where an entire party had been swept away by an avalanche. Usually the pilgrimages cease when the weather gets cold, but this one had started just too late, the snow had massed over the road, and some slight disturbance had caused the slip. The whole party were lost, and lay buried under the white blanket until the following spring.



MÜNSTEM, THE IMPERIAL SHOOTING CASTLE, WHERE THE TREATY OF MÜNSTER WAS SIGNED BY THE EMPERORS
OF RUSSIA AND AUSTRIA.



The Alpine flowers were lovely and their profusion wonderful. The little dells and ravines we passed were full of Iceland poppies, and the sky was reflected in the masses of fringed gentian. Edelweiss grows more prolifically in these Styrian mountains than in those of Switzerland, although even here it is perilous to gather.

As we approached the summit of the Sandbühel, the top of the mountain upon which Maria Zell is situated, it was about half-past six o'clock. The final rays of the sun, just sinking behind the higher peaks which surrounded Zell, threw all its golden glory upon the tall spires of the church, gilding them with transitory splendour and making them shine out like brilliant jewels in a splendid setting. Mountains rose in their protective might about the little village. A dull violet glow permeated all the landscape. Only the church, like a thing inspired, continued to shine with glory from without, even as it does within. While we gazed, the dying sun dropped behind the dark pine-clad mountains, and all the village became a dull and sombre place. Then, in a moment, from the dozens of little shops which, like a garden wall, surround the church, and do a thriving trade by selling candles, rosaries, crucifixes, cards and the thousand and one mementoes to the faithful who flock to the Gnadenaltar, wee lights began to twinkle forth, but so pale and dim were they in the face of the wondrous glory we had just beheld, that we felt the stern darkness of life. and

our hearts, like our bodies, seemed chilled ; the contrast was so penetrating and so great !

We descended from our carriage, cramped and cold. The Countess, who knew the place well, had proceeded at once to the best hotel, which even so was exceedingly primitive, and after refreshing ourselves we went at once to the church. In the nave is the chapel containing the Miraculous Image of the Virgin. It is a tiny lime-wood figure, under two feet in height, loaded with gorgeous jewels, dressed in splendid brocade heavy with gold and silver, and placed upon a silver altar ; and two immense diamonds of wonderful brilliancy, which had lately been presented by a Prince and Princess Esterhazy upon their honeymoon, adorned the statue, together with ropes of priceless pearls.

This statue was presented in the year 1157, and the chapel in which it is enshrined is a part of the church erected in 1363 by Ludwig I. of Hungary in commemoration of his victory over the Turks. The basilica (Gnaden-Kirche) was erected in 1644-99.

The treasure which is owned by this church in a simple village of about a thousand souls is marvellous. In the sacristy—where things are very badly kept, I must say—we saw jewels worth far more than the proverbial king's ransom ; rows and rows of pearls, of a size and of a perfection in shape I have never seen equalled, have been ruined by dust and carelessness. Glass cases line the sides of the sacristy, under which are drawers containing wonderful Gothic vestments

presented by Ludwig I. of Hungary. There is the gold and diamond pen of Zacharius Werner, and a remarkable painting on copper of the Madonna, said to be by Guido Reni.

In the church itself the treasures are displayed with a lavish hand. The altar gates are of silver, marvellous specimens of the art of the silversmith of the eighteenth century. They were presented by the Empress Maria Theresa, and upon them is engraved the tree of the Habsburg-Lorraine family, and above has been added that of the King of Naples. Upon the High Altar itself, which is covered with a canopy of silk and velvet encrusted heavily with silver embroidery, are magnificent lustres of cut crystal, flinging prismatic brilliancy with a lavish generosity as the gleams from the candles touch them. These were presented by the Emperor Karl VI. The east window is a riot of splendid colour in old stained glass, and in truth the gorgeousness is so prevalent that one finds it rather overpowering, although I will say the atmosphere of this church is one of the most devotional I have ever entered.

August the 18th was the Emperor's birthday, and the Archduchess was always permitted to choose her own manner of celebrating this fête. This year, I recall, she chose to have a gala tea for the school-children. Word was sent down that the children were to have a holiday, and sports were to be indulged in. Cakes and goodies, together with prizes for the races, were sent down to the village from the

Castle, and about three o'clock in the afternoon the Archduchess, attended by the Countess Coudenhove, Madame de Touzet and myself, followed.

We found an array of absolutely spotless children, shining from the effects of a plentiful application of soap and water, their hair slicked until it shone, and their wide eyes round with excitement and wonder. At first they were fearful and extremely shy of the Archduchess, but she was determined to play, and play she would, although for a time it looked very like a "lone hand." However, after a while we decided to withdraw for a time and see whether the children would not respond more spontaneously to the Archduchess's advances; so we drew back and joined the teachers, asking them impertinent questions, veiled with that air of graciously superior patronage one so quickly learns when living in the shadow of Royalty. Of course we were still within earshot of the Archduchess and the children, and after a little, when I daresay we were bored by our own airs and graces, we concluded that, as we did not hear any indications of a greater freedom existing in the regions of the playground, we had best return.

Upon our arrival we were startled and shocked to find the Archduchess quite alone, and all the school-children being ordered about by a pushing Jewess, who, staying in the place and hearing of the fête, had joined it almost immediately after our withdrawal, and quickly grasping the opportunity to seize the reins of management, was ordering the whole

entertainment, the Archduchess included. It was almost worth while to have seen the expression upon the latter's face. Surprise and a haughty rebellion at such impertinence were mingled with a certain disdainful shyness. Of course, as soon as we took in the situation, the intrusive lady was quickly deposed, and after a hearty tea the children all played quite freely.

The same evening, the villagers, the foresters and keepers joined in a torchlight procession in honour of their Emperor. Away down the mountain we saw it approaching, tiny twinkling lights, like large fire-flies amidst the forests; then nearer and nearer it wound its way up the mountain towards the Castle. The effect was weirdly strange. The peasants were all in gala dress, and the foresters and keepers in their picturesque uniforms. Flickering, twinkling, the long tail of lights climbed the mountain side, until at last they all closed in a dense mass in front of the Castle.

The Archduchess stood on the balcony, a slim, childish figure, the lights illuminating her pale hair until it bore a resemblance to the crown she ought to wear—which, indeed, as far as Hungary is concerned, she is entitled to wear as legal ruler, the Hungarian Constitution permitting of a female Sovereign. Her dignity was without reproach, and we marvelled as we hovered behind her. The people were enthusiastic, for they dearly love their old Emperor who goes amongst them so freely and understands them

so well, and their affection falls also upon his granddaughter's shoulders. Loud cries of "*Hoch!*" and the strange, uncanny *yodels*—so musically weird—echoed loud and long, dying softly away in the surrounding mountains. The National Anthem, "Gott Erhalte," was sung lustily, the Archduchess thanked them, the procession wound its way down the mountain, and we watched it disappear.

The next day we went for a long walk, following the dry bed of a stream, which was literally filled with Iceland poppies in gorgeous bloom, the fragile heads nodding in the constant breeze, making a marvellous effect of brilliant colour amidst the deep, dark green of the pine-clad mountain. Here edelweiss is found in great abundance, although not easily accessible. A few days later two men lost their lives in an effort to gather it; as the Russian Emperor and Empress were to pay a visit to Vienna, and by the order of the Empress Elizabeth, who was doing them the unusual honour of receiving them in person, the table for the state banquet was to be wholly decorated with this rare and exquisite flower. The effect, with the marvellous gold plate, was superb; but it seemed to me a terrible price to pay for the flowers—the lives of two men!

We returned from our mountain climb with excellent appetites, and went to the *Jäger's* house for *gölter*, or tea. The *Jäger*, the chief huntsman, has an enviable appointment, and one much sought after by gentlemen of limited incomes. Here we

heard that our Dr. Armanthaler had distinguished himself by shooting nine chamois. As we were very fond of our doctor, though I bore him a tiny bit of a grudge for his murderous assault upon my tooth a few days previous, still, when the chamois was prepared, the others out of compliment—myself, I fear, more to heap coals of fire upon his head than for any less selfish motive—endeavoured to eat of the meat, but it *was* nasty—too nasty to describe.

The 21st was the anniversary of the Crown Prince Rudolph's birth. We rose early, and, dressed all in deep mourning, participated in a "Black Mass." The little Archduchess was not at all pleased. This had happened every 21st of August for ten years, and each time she was clad in deep mourning, made to read and say many prayers, and a great effort was also made to induce her to be serious for this day at least, but, alas! with no satisfactory result. She was sullen over the black clothes, and all that one could get out of her was, "But it was not my father—Papa is *not* dead!"

After this the weather broke and it rained incessantly until, shut up as we were in a comparatively small place—for Mürzsteg, although nominally a castle, is only a shooting-box, and not so large as many owned by private persons—we were all on edge with one another, and our nerves were worn threadbare. When it was announced that we would return to Vienna the next day (the 29th) I am certain that each member of the suite felt impelled to greet the

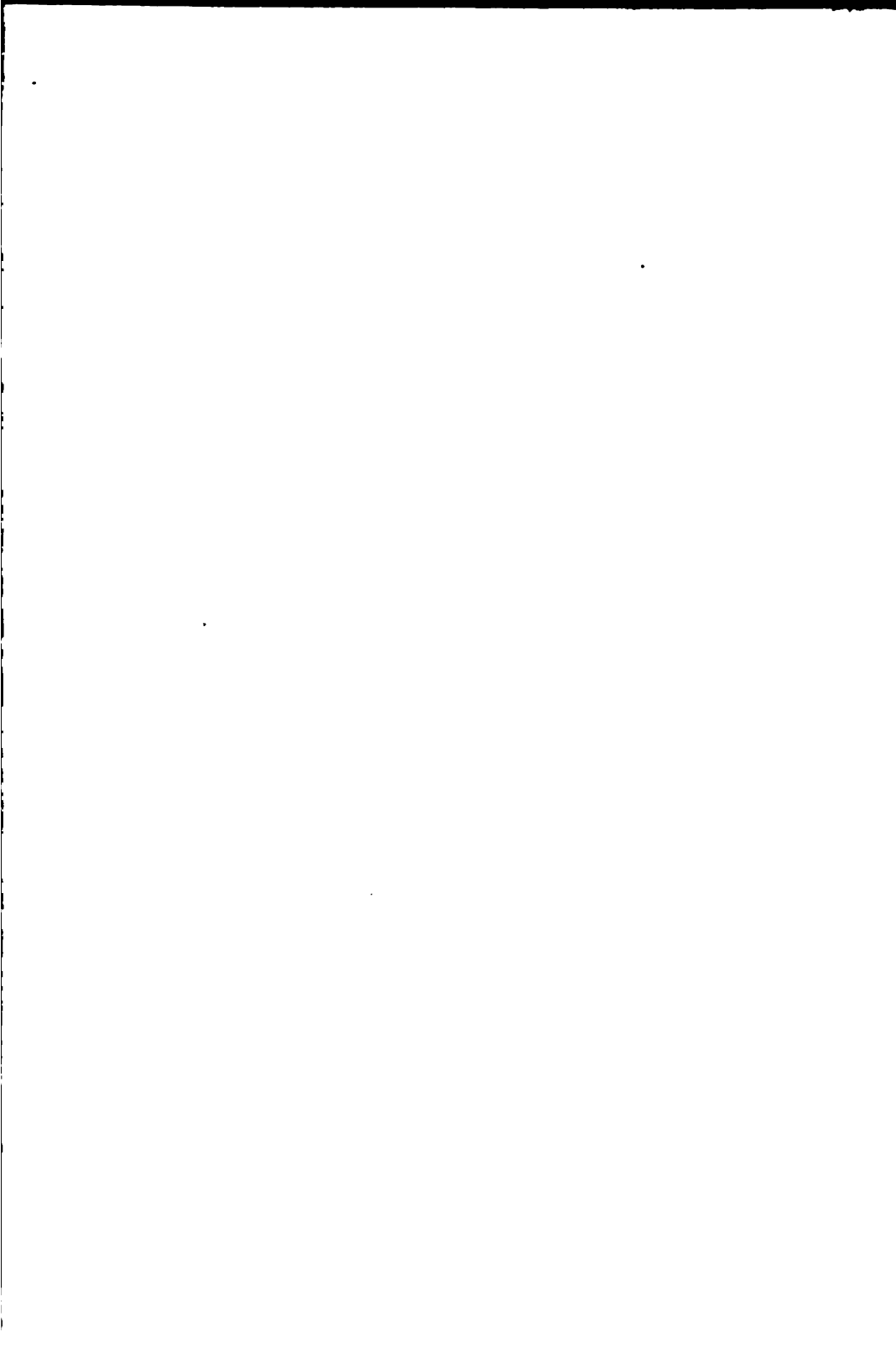
intelligence with a hearty cheer. Of course, we only maintained a dignified, unemotional silence, but I know how I felt, and I am quite certain of the feelings of the others as well.

“Château Impérial,
“Laxenburg,
“*September 2nd, 1896.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“We are back here again, you see. We returned on the 29th. It was so awfully cold and wet at Mürzsteg that the change is exceedingly pleasant, and my rooms here are so nice and comfortable. To-day (September 2nd) we are in gala—it is the Archduchess’s birthday. I wish you could see me in a light silk with much lace, and a bonnet embroidered in silver, with red rosettes. I can assure you I am an imposing spectacle! We have to go and congratulate, and then we assist at an official Mass in church, where everyone tries to be the grandest; it is such a blessing to be tall!

“The Archduchess has again elected to dig and cook potatoes for a feast! My poor dress! The Russian Emperor and Empress have been on a visit to Vienna. I hear from the ’Burg that the suite were continually getting lost, and it was a frequent occurrence to come upon a poor lady-in-waiting, clad in all her splendour, and dissolved in tears, wildly rushing this way and then that in one of the corridors. The soldiers were kept busy escorting damsels in distress. The ’Burg





HER MAJESTY THE CZARINA ALEXANDRA.

[between pp. 228 and 229.]



HIS MAJESTY_NICOLAS II., CZAR OF RUSSIA.

(between pp. 228 and 229.

is a confusing place. It has been built on and added to for the past six hundred years.

“The Archduchess wants to send you one of her birds when I go home. That is a great mark of honour, I assure you. She displays the liveliest curiosity concerning my family and all their tastes and talents, likes and dislikes, and when I told her you loved birds she at once decided you are to have one from her aviary. It is attached to her apartment in the Hofburg, and there are several hundred birds in it; each has his own name, and the Archduchess is devoted to them all. So I trust you appreciate the great compliment she means to pay you.

“With best love,

“From your

“M.”

The weather continued delightful during September, warm and bright, but, alas! with every blessing there seems a prick, and it was such a decided prick in this instance that a moan went up from all the inmates of the Palace, for Laxenburg was full, literally *infested*, with mosquitoes. My ankles were so bitten and became so swollen and inflamed that I was compelled to wear cold water compresses upon them. The Crown Princess showed me her arms, which were highly inflamed from being bitten at dinner when she was in evening dress. During this stay at Laxenburg I made the acquaintance of Madame and Mademoiselle Nunez, the widow and

daughter of the brave General who met his death so loyally in Mexico by the side of the Archduke Maximilian, brother of the Emperor, and for such a brief time Emperor of that turbulent country. Madame Nunez was a Belgian and spent her winters in Brussels. The Emperor Franz Josef gave her a pretty place at Laxenburg, as a small token of his appreciation of the noble part played by her husband during the short and tragic reign of his brother. The Crown Princess had been a very intimate friend of Mademoiselle Nunez, but owing to some quarrel or misunderstanding (Stephanie had many such) there was now a coolness between them.

In September I received the appended letter from Madame Merry del Val. I give it because of the reference to Father Kolb, to whom I have referred before.

“San Sebastian,

“September 11th.

“MY DEAR M.,

“I have been so slow in answering your last that I almost fear you may have left Mürzsteg before these lines get there.

“I will begin by saying how much I hope the mountain air may have made you feel strong, once that very disagreeable incident of ‘the tooth’ was over. You must have wished for Dr. Fenchelle. But it was almost worth while to go through it, since the episode served to show how much your little lady is attached to you. I am glad you had Fr. Kolb’s

visit. I fancy, but perhaps it is only fancy, that as it was with me, he is not precisely a *comfort* to your soul. I always found that he *shut me up* so! I used to come away without having said all I wanted, not half! Still, of course, one knows he is a wise and safe confessor.

"My Alfonso is here, working in the F. Office, as the Minister has come to stay while Her Majesty remains. Domingo, the youngest, makes *Apparitions*, having electrical work in Madrid and Barcelona.

"Monsignor, as perhaps you know from himself, left Rome on 23rd August. The Holy Father has given him leave till 15th October. He was ill in bed with rheumatism and fever before he left, but T. G. the attack was not serious, and it soon lessened, so that, I hope, he is really quite well now. My sisters-in-law write to give me good news of his health, about which his own letters do not usually say much.

"We shall be here, I suppose, till the Queen goes, and the date of her departure is usually about 15th October. We may possibly spend a week in Brussels on our way to Rome as we are pressed to do by the new Nuncio there, our friend Monsignor Rinaldini, and there are many people we should care to see again in that place.

"Good-bye, my dear M. Let me have your news without being so slow about it as I am.

"Love from Maria.

"Yours affectionately,

"JOSEPHINE MERRY DEL VAL."

In November we were very gay at the Court. The marriage of the Duke of Orléans with the Archduchess Maria Dorothea took place. There were many guests, including the Queen of Portugal, the Duchess of Aosta, both sisters of the bridegroom, the Duke of Connaught, and many other notables attended, although it was strictly in the capacity of private individuals, not as representatives of States. The Emperor escorted the Queen of Portugal, and the Duke of Connaught the Duchess Aosta at the wedding, and it was remarked that, though the Emperor Franz Josef is by no means a small man, both ladies were considerably taller than their escorts.

The day prior to the wedding, the Archduchess went through the ceremony of renunciation. In the presence of the Emperor, the Archdukes and all the great officers of State, she solemnly renounced all her rights of succession to the throne of Austria, excepting in case the entire male line of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine should become extinct. There was much gossip about this marriage. The ladies of France presented a beautiful diamond crown to the Archduchess, the design being fleur-de-lis exquisitely carried out, and in her response of acceptance, she said that when the Duke felt the time had arrived to take his rightful place, then they would find her at his side, which by many was interpreted as a promise of support from higher sources in Austria.

CHAPTER XX

EARLY in November I received the following letter from Madame Merry del Val.

“Rome,

“*November 4th, 1896.*

“MY DEAR M.,

“Though, as you will see further on, this letter is not wholly unselfish, I hope you feel *quite sure* that I would in any case have written as soon as I could, in order to tell you that we are back again in our old quarters in the Eternal City, and to ask for news of you. I imagine that you might say now, as in September, that you ‘have not heard from Mongr. for some time.’ If so, don’t think you are worse off than others. After a long silence he wrote me that his correspondence was very much behind! He is still away in England, but we expect him back very soon now, only as he is carrying on business for the Pope, consequent on the Bull condemning Anglican Orders, he has *heaps* to write here and much to do in England about converts, etc.

"On Sunday, Maria and I went to the H. F.'s Mass. Affectionately he told me, when we went to his feet, Raffael would soon be back, 'but he must bring many Anglican converts with him.' So I know my son is busy, and you must pray that the *net* may be full of big fishes. I will try to send you some 'Tablets' which may interest you.

"x x x x x. Now I must stop, dear M. Maria sends her love to you *energetically*, and I am

"Yours affectionately,

"J. M. DEL V."

Turning up this letter amongst many others, my mind leaped back to that time in Rome when the Anglicans tried hard to establish the validity of their orders, and I recalled many of the points which I had heard canvassed in those families of Rome who rest in the shadow of the Vatican, viz., members of the Black Party—particularly when I resided with the Duchess of Bomargo. For twenty years the facts have burned in my brain, so that I embrace this opportunity of making public a little of what I know regarding the Borghese Papers, which were said to contain the proofs that the line of the Church of England had remained unbroken from Rome. And I beg a little leniency—and I hope some interest—from such persons as are good enough to read this volume, if I digress, in this instance, from the set order of my recollections.

According to Lord Halifax's account, recently



CAFFIGIOLA, THE SUMMER HOME OF THE DUKE OF BOMARZO.

published by him under the title of "Leo XIII. and Anglican Orders," it was early in the year 1890 that he met and became intimate with the Abbé Portal in Madeira. The question of the validity of the Orders was spoken of between them and the subject of reunion broached.

Lord Halifax says that he thinks now the intimacy and close friendship which sprang up and grew between them was in all likelihood permitted by the Superiors, in the hope that he, as a prominent Anglican, might be brought to Rome. It is possible that no thought occurred to them of any revival of the question of reunion, as doubtless the heads of the Roman Church considered that with the conversion of Newman, Manning, and some others of importance at the beginning of the Oxford Movement, the aspirations of the Anglicans were settled for all time.

But it was only a temporary cessation of effort, and the sunshine of the Abbé Portal's sympathy was destined to make the desire flower again. Later, in that same year, the Abbé, with the Bishop of Funchal, made a tour of Italy, and the subject was discussed on all sides at Rome—both in and out of the Vatican: theological authorities were consulted; opinions asked and given; the Padre de Augustine, a Jesuit professor at the Roman College, pronounced emphatically for the validity of the Anglicans' Orders.

The agitation continued, and in 1894—in

September—the Abbé Portal was summoned again to Rome, this time by Leo XIII. It was then that I first heard mention of the Borghese Papers, although in Catholic circles in Rome they had been discussed *sub rosa* since the original Oxford Movement.

The Pope was old, and greatly influenced by Cardinal Rampolla. It is not to be doubted that His Holiness was sincerely anxious for the reunion, but it is only too plain that this was not desired by the English Cardinal Vaughan; whether Cardinal Vaughan's objections were altogether based upon conviction of ecclesiastical doubt, or were partly due to a jealous regard for his own *personal* importance, which must of necessity have suffered in consequence of a reunion in England, it is indeed difficult to guess.

Enough that he showed plainly and with perfect candour his intense repugnance to the very thought, and all the great forces of his colossal will and wonderful personality were brought to bear upon the Italian Cardinals—and even upon the Holy Father. His intense antipathy was not in the least veiled; he never dissembled, but said quite frankly what he wished; and for this honesty he is to be commended.

He told the Pope, in whom he saw signs of favouring the reunion and who could not but have had a personal conviction, not to say an absolute knowledge, of the right, that there was no chance of a corporate reunion; that they should only look



THE PRINCES JULIO AND ORAZIO BORGHESE.



for individual conversions; that the whole desire arose only from a wish to strengthen the High Church Party in the English Church, in order to keep souls back from submission to the Roman Church. "In reality," said he, "England was deeply antagonistic to Papal Supremacy, and the Anglicans were only anxious to receive some assurance as to their Orders, as otherwise many waverers would go over to Rome."

So completely did he bring the force of his great will to bear upon the matter, added to the special knowledge and influence he would have as a British Prince of the Roman Church, that he completely dominated both Cardinal Rampolla and Monsignor Merry del Val, winning their co-operation, so that together they led His Holiness to expect a huge influx of individual conversions after the publication of the Bull *Apostolicae Curae*; and Monsignor Merry del Val—who, to his honour be it said, had from the beginning sincerely and firmly combated the statement of schismatical origin, and insisted that it could only be called heretical—was forthwith dispatched to England to proselytize.

The letter I have quoted shows the expectations of the Pope quite plainly, and in most of Madame Merry del Val's letters during the sitting of the Commission, she mentions it, referring to the arduous labours of Monsignor, and particularly to those of Dom Gasquet—a cousin, by the way, of the late Cardinal Manning—and of Canon Moyes. The

Commission sat entirely in secret. That the conference was not open was not only unfair, but it made it impossible for the Anglicans to supply the Commission with full information as to historical points, which should have been discussed freely. It was most unfortunate for the success of the Anglicans that certain documentary evidence, which it was said in Roman circles would have proved beyond question the actual Apostolic descent without a break, was unknown, or at least inaccessible to Lord Halifax or others of the High Church Party. I have previously referred to these documents as the "Borghese Papers."

Now Pope Leo XIII. had acquired these documents by purchase in April, 1892, that is two years after the agitation had been recommenced by Lord Halifax, and when the Pope and his satellites were perfectly aware of the wishes and intentions of the Anglican Party, and had given every encouragement to that Party. At the time of the sitting of the Commission, these documents were safely stowed away in the archives of the Vatican.

The Borghese Palace stands to-day, a most magnificent monument to the glory of a family, the wealthiest and most powerful that ever rose in Rome, founded on the beneficence of the Holy See. It was begun in 1590 by the Spanish Cardinal Pedro Deza, and purchased and finished by Camillo Borghese, known as Pope Paul V. (who also finished St. Peter's) and given to the nephew, Cardinal Scipio



THE PRINCESS ANNA MARIA BORGHESE.

Caffarelli-Borghese, with some seventy or eighty other estates lavished upon him by the Pope.

Paul V., the corner-stone of the Borghese family, primarily a Doctor of Law, risen from the ranks through all gradations of ecclesiastic dignities, had not identified himself with politics, but had lived quietly amongst his books and his documents, and thus, when he acquired the Tiara, he brought the strict precision of a jurist to bear upon all ecclesiastical questions, never for an instant doubting his temporal power any more than he did his spiritual.

For centuries the Borghese maintained an almost regal state. Then, in 1870, Prince Paolo Borghese became involved in great building speculations. Becoming exceedingly hard pressed for money, although he had inherited forty thousand pounds a year from his father, he decided to sell the Borghese Collection of MSS. The nucleus of this collection had been formed by the founder of this family's wealth, Pope Paul V., and was his especial pride. Every available source was drawn upon to render this the most complete collection in Rome—even documents rightfully belonging to the Vatican, both before and during his reign, were pilfered.

[However, it must be remembered that in those days such acts were not looked upon in the same light as they would be to-day, and that throughout Europe families of distinction who conducted public affairs were in the habit of keeping in their possession

at least a portion of the documents connected with such affairs.

There is an index among the Borghese Papers headed, "Cardinal Borghese's share of MSS." In Professor Ranke's preface to his "History of the Popes"—1843 edition—he remarks: "As the Vatican Gallery, although distinguished by its choice collection of masterpieces, cannot compete in compass and historical importance with some private ones, such as the Borghese or Doria Galleries, so does it happen that the manuscripts preserved in the Barberini, Chigi, Alteri, Albani and Corsini Palaces are of inestimable value for the history of the Roman Popes, civil and ecclesiastical."

Each of these embraces chiefly the epoch of the Pope of the family, but as each successive possessor aimed at increasing the importance of his collection, and a literary commerce having been established in Rome, sufficient opportunities were opened to extend a collection to periods both considerably earlier and later than that of the original founder.

I cannot but note that Professor Ranke does not include any mention of the Borghese Collection of MSS. in his reference—not even in his appendix does he give a single note upon it, which strongly inclines me to doubt his knowledge of its existence. It is just possible that he was denied access to it; but were that so, I think, he would have mentioned it, as he speaks plainly regarding the restrictions



PRINCE JULIO BONAPARTE.

placed upon him in his researches in the Vatican library.

It is, however, quite probable that the Borghese, being the most bigoted of Roman Catholics, would have refused permission to a Protestant. It is a thousand pities, in the interests of truth, that Professor Ranke could not have examined this ponderous storehouse of historical treasure, as he mentions that the collections to which he did obtain access presented to him unlooked for prizes in the way of authentic and pertinent materials. Had he had the privilege of exploring the contents of the Borghese MSS.—some two thousand in all—what new facts might he not have brought to light ?

When Prince Paolo found himself in 1875 so pinched for ready money, he offered this collection to the British Museum for forty thousand pounds. But I regret to say that the offer was refused. However, when the English Government did not, could not, or would not, see its way to make the purchase, the Prince drifted along for some years, until in 1891 the final crash came, and pictures, manuscripts, books—even the splendid Palace itself—came under the auctioneer's hammer.

The family and their friends, being thoroughly cognizant of the contents of the ecclesiastical manuscripts, and the old Duchess Salviati, bearing a burning hatred of the English in her breast, and never allowing the slightest opportunity to slip of aiming a blow at any pretensions on the part of the

Anglican Church—though of English descent herself—it can scarcely be doubted but an account of the contents of these papers was conveyed to the Vatican. When offered again for sale in April, 1892, they were immediately purchased by Leo XIII.'s agent, removed at once to the Vatican and placed under lock and key, so that what we have reason to believe is an indisputable proof of the validity of the Anglican Orders, contained in this collection, is now lost to the world.

Every effort to examine the collection was met with the bland response that they were as yet unclassified and unindexed, and therefore it was impossible to permit any inspection. It is well known amongst those who have had access to the papers while they were still in the Borghese Palace, that there is *a complete index*, alphabetically arranged in folio, and written in the year 1783 under the title of "Index of the Manuscripts of the Borghese Library."

Considering this, it is difficult to believe that it was because of their unclassified condition that Anglicans were denied access to these crucially important papers. The only way the Vatican can convince the public that this was the real reason for denial of access will be to allow the publication—*unexpurgated*—of this collection, according to the index of 1783.

I must append an apology to this chapter, which, I venture to hope, may not be entirely without



THE ROYAL GOVERNESS WITH THE PRINCESS ANNA MARIA BORGHESE, ROME.

interest to some readers. I am neither a theologian nor a historian, and the facts I have here written down are merely memories of conversations held with various members of the Borghese family with whom I spent two years in Rome, and at their various estates. I was much interested in the history of the family, and so it came about that these facts were told me amongst many.

I have endeavoured to verify most of the points by consulting some authoritative works, viz., Professor Ranke's "History of the Popes," "The Cambridge History of the Reformation," and a few others, and I have taken the privilege of quoting from "Leo XIII. and Anglican Orders," lately published by Lord Halifax, and, of course, the letters from Madame Merry del Val to me speak for themselves. There was an intimacy between the families of Merry del Val and the Borgheses.

June 10th.

"MY DEAR M.,

"I wonder where you are, and how things are going with you? To-day I write at the request of the Duchess of Bomargo (Borghese), and I must hasten to say what she wishes. She has a little girl aged eight, as well as several boys older. For the latter, she has a German tutor. She wants an English governess to undertake the education of her little girl, who is a very bright and decided little person who chooses to be a penitent of Monsignor. Thus

it has happened that the Duchess asked him if he knew of a lady to suit, and he named you.

“ Affectionately yours,

“ J. M. DEL VAL.”

So it came about that I went to live at the Villa Borghese.

CHAPTER XXI

JANUARY, 1897, saw the heaviest snowfall of many years in Vienna. The Archduchess was like a child of eight over it, and I could scarcely restrain her from making and throwing snowballs at the people, when we were walking in the Ring or Kaiser's Garden. We used to drive out occasionally to Schönbrunn, when the snow was hard enough for sleighing, and there the Archduchess was met by her ponies, harnessed to a little sleigh, and while she drove about I waited in the Palace.

My favourite place was the apartments of the ill-fated little King of Rome, son of Napoleon I. by his marriage with Marie Louise. These rooms had a melancholy attraction for me, and I used to walk about, looking from the windows upon the same stiff, formal gardens that he had gazed upon from what was virtually his prison.

The rooms are full of mementoes of the poor little lad whose heart was broken with love and longing for his father. Upon the walls hang dozens of portraits of Napoleon in every uniform and costume, and of Marie Louise in very little. The bedroom, where

"L'Aiglon" died, has been made into a chapel, but nothing can dispel the gloomy atmosphere which seems redolent of the crushed spirit of the broken-hearted boy.

There was at Schönbrunn a small zoological garden, which was a never-ending source of pleasure to the Archduchess, who was devoted to all animals. One morning my maid brought me a note, written in red crayon, upon a piece of paper which the Archduchess had evidently abstracted from the Countess Coudenhove's note-book. It read :

"Please to go with me in the Garden with the wild best.—E."

So after our lesson we set out for the "Garden with the wild best," and the Archduchess was perfectly happy. She fed the various small animals, and then we went to the bear-pit; suddenly she produced a broom (where she had got it, I never could imagine), and, leaning over the parapet, she proceeded to poke a small brown bear with it. I was terrified and the keepers looked very worried, but the Archduchess was full of mischief, and when she saw the anxiety she created, her cheeks grew scarlet with excitement and her eyes danced with merriment. She never knew the meaning of the word fear.

Presently, the brown bear, resentful of continued baiting, snarled angrily, rose upon his hind legs and seized the end of the broom. The keepers were by now



From an engraving.

THE ARCHDUCHESS MARIE LOUISE, AFTERWARDS EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH.

quite pale with anxiety, and really did not know what to do, when relief, in a most unexpected fashion, came.

The Gardens are open to the public, and a number of people were about upon this morning. While the Archduchess was pulling and twisting to get the broom away, and the bear on his side was pulling and twisting to keep it, a meek, little old woman—I should judge of the better class tradespeople—dressed in a plain black cloak, her grey hair parted and banded over her ears and crowned by a simple black bonnet, the ties of which wagged indignantly, seized the broom from the Archduchess's hands, pushed her away, and exclaimed: "Little girl, you ought to be ashamed to tease dumb animals that way. I wonder that your parents have not taught you better!" With which, having gained possession of the astounded Archduchess's end of the broom, she allowed it to drop into the pit, and I really expected her to box the Archduchess's Royal ears.

Both myself and the keepers stood stupefied and utterly helpless while this scene, which in reality only took about a minute, was being enacted. Then the keepers rushed forward and hustled the surprised and indignant old woman away, telling her who the august personage was whom she had accosted so violently, and the last I saw of her she was being led away, her bonnet awry, her eyes round with terrified surprise, and in a shrill voice she was crying: "Der Frau Erzherzogin Elisabeth! Our Emperor's grand-

daughter! *Mein Gott!!!*" Of course, she had no idea to whom she was speaking, but I always had a deep feeling of gratitude towards that old woman, whoever she was, and I am sure the keepers felt the same.

As for the Archduchess, she was a little sulky for a time, but the memory of the old woman's agony when she discovered her identity proved too comic for her offended dignity to resist. About this time she began riding lessons, and three times a week we went to the Riding School, which was attached to the Imperial Stables. She looked so pretty perched on a really tall horse. She has naturally a good seat and a lovely figure, and the Spanish school of horsemanship, which is still in vogue in Austria, is the most elegant in the world. At the Riding School we saw some beautiful white horses, which were being broken in for a present from the Emperor to the King of Siam.

The Archduchess had a bad cold and it was difficult to amuse her in her rooms. One afternoon, as a great treat, she was permitted to come to my rooms and do exactly as she liked. What a Princess likes to do, when given a free hand, is usually the most unlikely thing which would enter an ordinary person's mind. In this instance, the Archduchess first made for my box of oil paints, with the contents of which she proceeded to decorate my apartment, painting the looking-glasses and lamp shades.

Then, when she got tired of that, she went into my kitchen, where she turned up her sleeves and proceeded to cook! She made chocolate, which she likes very

much, but is not allowed to eat, and all the time she was stirring it she kept saying: "I will not eat it! Of course, I will not eat it!" However, when it was done, down she sat in the kitchen and ate it all, and well scraped out the pot!

Then she found some sausages, and cooked and ate them also. I was in a panic of fear lest she should be ill. When she had finished the sausages, she looked about for some more means of mischief; discovering my tin of flour, she suddenly dived into it with both hands, and shrieking with laughter, before I could stop her, pelted me until I was completely powdered white. Then, quickly through my *salon* to the window she flew, emptying the balance of the flour upon the soldiers standing sentry beneath in the courtyard. Of course, they did not dare even turn their heads, and angry as I was, I could not help but laugh at the expression of absolute terror which spread over their faces as the white shower descended upon their smart uniforms.

But when I came to realize the awful mess my *salon* was in, I was truly annoyed and exclaimed: "You are a dirty little thing!" At that, all the fun fled from her eyes. She drew herself up, looking ridiculously Royal, despite the smudges of chocolate on her pretty cheeks and nose, and the flour all over her frock. "I am not a thing, I am an Archduchess," she replied. Taking the cue instantly, I made a deep curtsy, and responded: "I regret my *faux pas*, Imperial Highness. I shall not forget again."

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T. M. P.

After that, relations seemed strained, and she dawdled about with a very bored manner. Then, as she was about to leave, I made another curtsy, and said: "*Au revoir*, Imperial Highness." She looked at me for a second and tears rushed into her sweet eyes, then she flew across the *salon*, and flinging her bare arms—her sleeves were still rolled up—around my neck, hugged me close, crying: "No, no, I am not a *dirty* little thing, but a *dear little thing*!"

The cold which the Archduchess had contracted proved persistent, and would not yield to treatment. Therefore, the Hofrath doctor ordered her to be taken to Abbazia. The morning she was to leave, in company with her mother, the Crown Princess Stephanie, she sent for me to say good-bye before her toilet had been made.

So long did she loiter about that the maid who was to dress her was obliged to go on ahead in order to arrange the compartment in the special train which was to take them, her other two attendants having gone ahead to Abbazia the preceding night. I told the woman I would assist with the Archduchess's toilet, and she gladly hurried away.

All went well until it came to the buttoning of the Archduchess's boots, and that my lady refused to permit. "It is not work for you!" she exclaimed, and, seizing the button-hook, endeavoured to do it herself. Never in her life had she done such a thing before, and her awkwardness was ludicrous. I would

far sooner have done it and could have had the boots fastened in one third the time, but she got so excited over it that I could only stand silently by and watch. Eventually, however, all was finished, and I saw her off to the train, where she joined her mother, the Crown Princess, and I returned to my rooms, prepared to thoroughly enjoy a few weeks' rest, wherein I might visit, paint, read, and make a retreat.

But about three days later, the secretary of our suite came to tell me that I must join the Archduchess at Abbazia on the 15th. I was really glad, as I liked the life at Abbazia, and it was bitterly cold in Vienna.

The Badenis were living in strenuous times, the Count having, by his firm loyalty, won the animosity of his political opponents. The scenes in Parliament grew more and more turbulent, and one morning, Wanda and I having gone to the Count's private box from where the debates could be heard and followed, the disputes and attacks became so violent and malignant, that the Count, who was presiding, sent us a message, insisting that we should leave at once, as it was not safe for us to remain there.

I arrived in Abbazia on the 14th of February. The Archduchess seemed very pleased to see me, and I found that my room was situated next to hers, as she said I was so gentle and quiet, and never banged about the room and disturbed her. The rest of the suite were plainly jealous. The French governess, Madame de Touzet, had been ill since the end of the previous

November, so I had double duty to perform. However, we managed extremely well without her.

Our apartments were on the top floor of the Villa Amalia, the same which had been lent to the German Emperor when I was at Abbazia with the Badenis, three years before. The Grand Duke of Luxemburg had the ground and first floors. He was such a delightful old gentleman, we all quite lost our hearts to him. He was very old, but his manners were absolutely perfect ; whenever we passed him, going in or out, we, of course, curtsied, and he would, with obvious difficulty but a charming smile, struggle to his feet and salute us. He was the great-uncle of the present young Grand Duchess of Luxemburg.

One evening, he had the famous Tzigane Band to play, and the wonderful wild strains of the gipsy music reached us in our apartment. There is something so marvellously fascinating about it that one cannot help listening (I always think the "Pied Piper" must have been a gipsy), so, regardless of rank or position, we all crowded out of our rooms and sat upon the stairs to listen. Someone carried word to the Grand Duke that we were there, and he at once sent to ask me to bring the Archduchess down, but she was so young that I did not dare comply, feeling certain the Emperor would not be pleased with the unconventionality of such a thing. Then the Grand Duke ordered the band to play out in the hall, that we might hear the music more clearly.

In some of our walks about Abbazia, on the out-



FIUME.—PALACE OF MARINE GOVERNMENT.

skirts of the village, we came upon a cottage standing alone and in a wood, where a madman was confined. It was a brick cottage of one room, with iron bars before the window, and entirely isolated. Twice a day a dish of cold cooked Indian corn was pushed in through the bars to the poor unfortunate man, but no person ever entered the room. He had been there two years. It seemed so awful. One day, when we ventured a little too near, the Archduchess and I heard him moaning. The sounds haunted us for a long while, and I often wondered if all was quite as it seemed, and I longed to go close enough to speak, but I dared not take the risk, as it might have cost me my position.

Carnival was at its height, and on Shrove Tuesday we all went to the Battle of Flowers in Fiume. The quaint old town, with its wonderful arches, the remains of old fortifications, was beautiful in the brilliant spring sunshine. The Archduchess went with her mother, and from the room reserved for the suites we looked across at the balcony and apartments reserved for the Royalties. The Duke and Duchess of Orléans, newly returned from their honeymoon, were there, and the Archdukes Joseph and Frederick August.

As the Crown Princess, with the Archduchess, entered, the Duke of Orléans and Archduke Joseph hurried forward to meet them. We expected to see merely the usual conventional bows, and it was a shock that took a moment to recover from to see the

Duke and the Archduke fling handfuls of hard confetti right into the ladies' faces; and to see the Crown Princess duck and dodge, and the Archduchess bubble with laughter, and seize upon the confetti and return the bombardment, made us hold our breath.

After this miniature battle, we saw them laughing and walking arm in arm to the balcony, where, being provided with a plentiful supply of the sugared ammunition, they proceeded to pelt all the ladies who passed in the carriages.

We had a balcony two stories up, and were supplied with large boxes of the confetti, and huge ladles with which to dip it out and throw it upon the passing crowd. This confetti is of sugar-plums made with chalk, and it really hurts awfully when thrown in the face. It seemed rather mean of us to throw it, as we were too high up for any to retaliate. There was an English Colonel with his son, who were going about, and the Countess Coudenhove and Countess Pallfyi saved all their confetti for these Englishmen. I got rather offended for my countrymen, until Count Schenzi assured me that it was intended as a compliment!

I am sure the Emperor would have been annoyed could he have seen the mad antics of the Royalties in the balcony opposite us. They were like a parcel of school-children out for a holiday, pelting the people and each other with flowers and confetti, and growing wilder and madder each moment. Flowery



FIGURE.—THE ARCHDUKE JOSEPH'S PALACE.

missiles rained at them, and they shrieked with laughter. Then came the usual shower of genuine rain, and all had to scamper for shelter. We saw no more of them after that until we returned to Abbazia, all tired, cross, and with enough carnival to last until the next year.

The Archduchess was now given an allowance, and it was really funny to see her try to make her money go as far as possible, while having no real idea as to its value. I went with her into a flower-shop one day in Abbazia, and it was difficult for me to keep a straight face. She has a little streak of meanness where money is concerned, and, I believe, that she gets it from her grandmother, the Empress.

Between Abbazia and Fiume was the great Austrian Whitehead Torpedo factory. The torpedoes were made on the pattern of the Whitehead patent, and at this time they were supplying large quantities to Japan. A crew of Japanese sailors arrived one day to navigate a new torpedo boat to Japan; but first the company were to make a trial trip, and the Archduchess was asked if she cared to go. As she was greatly interested, we made the trip, and I was surprised to find how extremely comfortable and convenient for a number of officers the boats were. On our return we were amused to see the swarm of little yellow sailors take possession of the ship.

The Crown Princess resumed her English lessons with me. She was very friendly and chatted freely, but she also was intensely curious, and asked many

questions which sometimes it was awkward for me to evade. Occasionally she spoke of her marriage. She told me, one day, that she was so strictly brought up by her mother, Queen Henrietta of Belgium, that the first time in her life she was permitted to eat whatever she wished was at her own wedding breakfast, and as a consequence she ate such a quantity of sweets that she was fearfully sick all the night. She was only sixteen when she married.

The Queen of Roumania was staying in Abbazia at this time. She was an eccentric person, and although clever certainly, the principal mark of her genius that we could see was going about with her hair down her back!

‘Vienna,

“12th February.

“MY DEAR M.,

“I suppose you are in Abbazia, and will stay there till the Archduchess comes back. When you will arrive in Vienna, do not forget to let me know. I shall be so pleased to see you again. We have had a lovely time in Monte Carlo. We spent there three weeks. On the 26th of this month we are going to Russia for my cousin’s wedding, and coming back we intend to stop two days in Warsaw, and two days perhaps in Cracow. The end of May we will leave Vienna and go to Büsk. What do you say about all the troubles and storms we passed through? My poor father is very tired; the last weeks he slaved

night and day. At least, he will have now a little rest during Easter.

“Best love, my dear M.

“From yours affectionately,

“WANDA.”

On the 13th I returned to Vienna, Madame de Touzet having come a few days prior to resume her duties. It was wonderful how this broken-down old woman held to her post with such limpet-like tenacity. I presume, having spent the better part of her life in the Court atmosphere, it was like death to her to think of retiring into a private life.

On the 17th I received a telegram from the Archduchess, as follows :

“Dora est fiancée nous sommes stupefaits c’est le frère de L’Imperatrice de L’Allemagne, c’est tout ce que nous savons tendresses bonnes fêtes.—ERZSI.”

Poor little Princess Dora ! Her grandmother, the Princess Clementine of Coburg, had settled a large fortune upon her at her birth. For this, the unhappy child was to be sold to that *roué*, Ernest of Günther, a man over thirty then, and who had already been mixed up in that anonymous letter scandal—one of the most unsavoury affairs that had ever been made public, connected with the German Court. The Günthers were poorer than the proverbial church mice, and no doubt little Dora’s fortune came in

right handily. Immediately upon the betrothal, the old Duchess of Günther took the child's neglected education in hand, and saw that she had proper governesses, so that she might be at least presentable. But my heart ached for poor little Dora, who was a sweet, generous-hearted little soul.

It was shortly after this that the Emperor insisted that Prince Philip of Coburg should fight Mattachich, the paramour of Princess Louise, and after that Louise was incarcerated in a lunatic asylum.

CHAPTER XXII

WAR was all that was talked of in Vienna at this time. Germany was feeling very uncertain as to the exact attitude of Austria ; that the victory of the Turks gave heartfelt satisfaction to their friends, the Germans, the latter did not conceal, and when it was announced that the German Emperor was coming to Vienna many were the expressions of curiosity as to the real and underlying reason for this visit. There was no true friendliness between the Austrian Emperor and the young German Emperor, and this feeling was deeply accentuated in the people. However, a great reception and military review were arranged, and the weather certainly did its part nobly, for a lovely day greeted us on the morning of April 21st. All the troops were drawn up for inspection, and in the brilliant sunshine, the jewelled orders sparkling on their breasts, the two Emperors, at the head of a brilliant suite of about a thousand officers, rode down the line inspecting the troops, after which the Austrian Emperor placed himself at the head and led them past the German Emperor, who received their salutes. It would be difficult to find a more imposing figure than the

Emperor Franz Josef in military costume riding upon his charger. When the cavalry approached, the Emperor of Germany, leaving his post, advanced to the head of the 7th Regiment of Hussars, of which he is Honorary Colonel, and led them past the Emperor of Austria, afterwards resuming his former position.

On all sides one heard speculations as to what the German Emperor expected to gain, for only some selfish motive could account for the Emperor William's apparent graciousness. As a matter of fact, I heard from ministerial lips that the young Emperor, rejoiced at the victory over the Greeks, desired to form an alliance with Russia. Knowing of the Emperor of Austria's approaching visit to St. Petersburg, and also aware, in his heart, although he would never have admitted it, that no sovereign exercised the immense political influence which Franz Josef did, he thought in his great egotism that he could prevail upon the old Emperor to use his personal intervention with the young Emperor of Russia during his visit, to bring about an *entente* between Russia and Germany. Emperor Franz Josef was, however, too shrewd and too old in statescraft to allow himself, at that time, to be made a cat-paw of, so the German Emperor went on his way in a fine rage, which he vented in a most inflammatory speech at Buda-Pest after the visit to Vienna, an exhibition of feeling which highly incensed the Austrian Emperor.

After the review there was a grand gala dinner at the Hofburg, and I went with the Archduchess to watch the Royalties from the musicians' gallery over the banqueting hall. The table was gorgeous with gold plate, and I find I wrote my mother, in an account of the banquet: "Our dear Emperor has a splendid appetite. The German Emperor, who sees everything, noticed our Archduchess up in the gallery and asked who she was. Upon being told, he asked our Emperor that she might come down after dinner and be presented. She is certainly growing remarkably pretty."

Evidently Emperor Wilhelm II. found her so, as later he sent his second son to visit the Austrian Court with the intention of making a matrimonial alliance between him and the Archduchess. But he counted *without* the Archduchess, for when she saw the youth, she exclaimed: "Marry that *boy*! Never!" and forthwith retired to bed, from whence she refused to emerge until His Imperial Highness had shaken the dust of the Austrian Court from his Royal shoes, and taken his departure.

As it had been remarked that during the visit of the Russian Emperor and Empress to Vienna, the Russian suite were continually getting themselves lost in the enormously long and intricate corridors of the Hofburg, so was it remarked that the members of the German suite never lost their way, and what was still more astonishing, not a single instance was known of any one of them even asking a soldier or

attendant to direct them. This was accounted for later, when one of the maids in cleaning out a room, occupied by a member of the suite, found a perfect plan of the Hofburg, drawn to scale and complete in every detail! Then was it recalled, that at various times and places, members of the suite had been seen studying some document earnestly, then, replacing it in pocket or bag, go on their way quite independently.

This fad, for having plans of private places, seems to have been a sort of mania with the German Emperor, and it was said that he possessed a complete diagram of every Palace in Europe. This little incident did not tend to lessen his unpopularity amongst the Viennese.

It was at this period that I saw the Empress Elizabeth for the second time. As usual, upon her return from Cap Martin, she stayed a few days at the Hofburg on her way to Lainz. One day I was passing through the corridor on my way from the chapel, when the guard whispered, "The Empress is coming," and I hastily drew to one side, and stayed curtsying as she passed. She had been to visit one of her maids who was ill. She was really very kind-hearted, I was told. I had a consuming curiosity to see her rooms, particularly as I knew it was absolutely against all rules, and one day I was permitted to steal quickly into her bedroom while she was away. The room was small, with a bed exactly in the middle. She thought it bad for her beautiful hair to sleep near a

wall, as there might be dampness. On the wall directly facing her when she was in bed hung a picture, painted in the most lurid colours, of the death of her cousin, the mad King Ludwig II. of Bavaria, and underneath was an inscription, "*Geheimnis*"—"My Secret!"

"Hofburg, Vienna,

"24th April.

"DEAREST VER,

"To-day the Count and Countess Badeni and Wanda took me to see Wanda's portrait, which has just been done. I was very flattered that they asked me to come, as it shows they think much of my opinion. When the Count saw me he said: 'Mais, ma chère Miss M., l'air de Vienne vous allez bien. Vous n'aviez jamais si bonne mine,' and he said it with such emphasis that it was a great compliment. The Count has any number of difficulties in politics, but all seems as if he could get his own way. To return to the portrait—it is awful. The Count did not care what he said. I pitied the poor artist. Wanda is painted before a pink curtain! When Prince Alfred Windischgrätz was taken to see it, I hear he said: 'It was almost a pity the Countess was not *behind* the curtain!'"

"With fondest love,

"M."

On May 5th we received news of the terrible fire at the Bazar de Charité in Paris, and that the Duchess

d'Alençon had perished there. She was a sister of the Empress, and, although they were not particularly affectionate, I believe it was a great shock to Her Majesty.

“Hofburg, Vienna,
“*May 10th, 1897.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“Three weeks quite black, and three weeks black and grey, for the Duchess of Alençon. Is it not trying just as one has got one's summer things? I always make up my mind to buy no more coloured clothes, but hats and bonnets—one cannot be always in black. The Archduchess dined with the Emperor and Empress on Friday—a family dinner at Lainz. The Empress was not so dreadfully sad. I asked the Archduchess what was said about the Greek War, and she replied :

“‘Grandpapa laughed at the Greeks, and Grand-mama got angry, and took their part.’

“What a smash up the Greeks have had! Everyone laughs at them here; I have not much pity for them, they are all brag, boasting and cowardice, the three things I most despise.

“We go to Laxenburg in about two more weeks.

“With fondest love,

“From
“M.”

“Laxenburg,

“*June 3rd, 1897.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“We are really here in Laxenburg at last. We came on the 31st, in the evening. Everything is so pretty, quantities of flowers, and the trees so fresh and green. Things here are later than in England. My rooms are charming. The Countess has lent me her grand piano, and my *salon* is so large that it does not fill it up at all. My bedroom is newly papered, everything fresh, and there are two doors put to it as I heard everything in the corridor when I had a headache. We shall be here all June and the beginning or half of July. The Countess has gone for a holiday, so I am very busy. I think it quite likely that I may come to England in July for a month, but will let you know as soon as everything is settled. It is very hot, and we are having thunder off and on all day.

“With best love,

“From

“M.”

Life went quite smoothly at Laxenburg with the Countess away. We had, a few days after our arrival, the questionable pleasure of a visit from the Archduke Louis Victor, the youngest brother of the Emperor. He was a confirmed gossip and repeated everything he saw and heard to the Emperor. In this instance we were particularly

annoyed, as the weather being so hot and the Archduchess hating her mourning for the Duchess d'Alençon, we had allowed her to put it off when just amongst ourselves. But the Archduke would spare no one who offended, not even a little fatherless girl, were she to violate the least particle of the strict Austrian etiquette. He is like his mother, the Archduchess Sophie, who was one of the hardest and cruellest of women, and whom on the occasion of this same visit I heard the Archduke Louis Victor praise in glowing terms of filial affection.

The weather grew hotter and hotter. We spent as much time as possible in the gardens. One of the Archduchess's favourite pastimes was to feed the carp in the lake. These are very, very old, and quite tame, coming up in masses with their mouths open to be fed. Many have gold bands around their necks which, it is said, were placed there by order of the Empress Maria Theresa. Some very hot afternoons we had our tea out in what was called the "Launy Haus," a pretty little summer-house in a quiet part of the park, not far from the "Ritter's Grab" or "Knight's Grave." "Launy" means, in English, temper or sulks, and the "Launy Haus" is said to have been built by some Empress who indulged in moods, and wished to get quite away from the crowd of courtiers which always surrounds royalty.

One day the Archduchess had out the Royal barge. It created rather a sensation and certainly it was



LAXENBURG.

an unusual sight. The velvet hangings are very ancient and the entire craft, with its carving and worn gilt, rowed by eight men all in very pretty Imperial uniforms, was most picturesque. The Archduchess looked like a little medieval Princess, with her patrician features and golden hair. The swans, floating softly along, added to the picture. A remarkably large number of black swans were about this summer, and near the centre of the lake is a small island which is densely populated with cream-coloured and blue peacocks. No wild thing is allowed to be killed in Laxenburg Park, and these peacocks multiplied so rapidly that when they roosted at night upon the trees on their little island, the drooping tails were like a beautiful cream and blue fringe.

One afternoon the Archduchess was having tea with me, and I noticed a gentleman pacing up and down in front of the apartments of the Crown Princess. There was usually a gentleman somewhere in Stephanie's vicinity, but though I had seen this same person before, I did not remember his face at any of the Court functions. I said to the Archduchess—more from idle curiosity than because I had the slightest reason to suppose that she would know any of her mother's numerous admirers, as they were so seldom together: "Who is that gentleman, Archduchess?"

She replied promptly: "That is Monsieur Lonyay now, but soon he will be Baron Lonyay, then Count

Lonyay, then Prince Lonyay, then he will marry Mama ! ”

I was horrified.

“ How do you know all this, Archduchess ? ” I demanded.

“ Oh, I know what I see, and I have heard Mama and Aunt Louise talking,” then, stirring her tea meditatively, she raised her big, innocent eyes to me, and remarked slowly :

“ I, too, shall make a *mésalliance*.”

No wise words came to me, and I felt silence was better than to risk saying the wrong thing, so I—apparently—calmly continued my tea, though my mental equilibrium was in a decidedly topsy-turvy condition.

A few days later I had the disquieting news from England that my mother was ill. I went to the Countess Coudenhove, who had meantime returned and taken up the reins of government, and asked, if the Archduchess were sent to the Tyrol as it was expected she would be, might I not go home instead of accompanying her. The Countess was in one of her particularly contrary and obstinate moods, and while I was perfectly certain that she did not want me, as she plainly showed her jealousy at the affection the Archduchess had for me, she refused to give me the desired leave.

In a few days a telegram arrived which alarmed me exceedingly, and I showed it to the Archduchess, who at once demanded that I be permitted to go

to England directly. She was very sweet, and insisted upon sending one of her rare canaries to my mother. Nothing would stop her, and I was obliged to take it. It was a very special bird, a lovely shade of yellow, with a nightingale note in its voice. But never shall I forget the journey through Europe with that bird in a little cage. At first I thought it would die of fright, but after the first day it became quite accustomed to the noise and motion of the train. Everyone in the carriage would give it fruit, and it disgraced me by rushing at it as if it were starved, though I gave it plenty of seed and food. It would take baths at frequent intervals and splash water everywhere. When I reached home, my sister says that the first thing she saw in the train was that bird in a cage. I was delighted to find my mother much better, and she was both amused and charmed with the Archduchess's present.

CHAPTER XXIII

WHILE I was in England, the Archduchess wrote me many cards and letters, and showed in all ways her affection for me. Of these letters I give only a few, as the mixture of French and English spelt in phonetic German renders the majority difficult for the uninitiated to read.

“Nous sommes arrivez tous très bien. Mamie incroyable. It is beautiful. I am quit delited. Mane Englisch ar her. I schell rit you a nice lettre in som days. Plese rit me how you ar. Je vous embrasse de tout mon coeur votre loeving

“ERZSI.”

“Karersee Hotel,

“Tirol,

“July 25th, 1897.

“DEAREST M.,*

“I rit to tell you the good nious that my dear ant Isabell has a little boyi. I am so happe

* “DEAREST M.,

“I write to tell you the good news that my dear Aunt Isabelle has a little boy. I am so happy I can't tell you how. You know how we spoke together over it and we hoped always it would be a son, and now it is. Here,

I kant tell you how. You know how we spok tugether over it and we hopt alwes it will be a sonne and now it is. Her it is after Laseenburg Abbazia and Miramar the nicest place I know I kenn onley tell you I loev it. All ar plect with it. I am kwid brown and it (manger) how I navee did it and slep evrey day as long as I wisch. It is rally a splandit life. The heles ar loevley the wetter alwis sins we ar her kit beautiful and in the day verry warm, wit evning and morning kul. The rums ar smol beut verry nice and cosey—the iting verry good. Sins to days there is not wone (I) nuage sur le ciele. Splendid. There was wone after non un arage with

it is, after Laxenburg, Abbazia and Miramar, the nicest place I know. I can only tell you I love it. All are pleased with it. I am quite brown and eat—as I never did, and sleep every day as long as I wish. It is really a splendid life. The hills are lovely, the weather since we are here quite beautiful, and in the day very warm with evening and morning cool. The rooms are small, but very nice and cosy. The eating very good. Since two days there is not one cloud in the sky. Splendid. There was one afternoon a thunderstorm with hail. It was awful. On the hills all was white. When shall I get a letter from my good old Pig? I hope soon. We are all very well.

“Madame is taking very long walks, and is so well that I cannot believe it. I think she is better than in Laxenburg. I know nothing from our dear Rosa. I hope she is well. I think she is so sad she cannot write. I have written you a long enough letter, I hope. I wish to receive one from you, as long as this. I embrace you, my dear, good M., of all my heart, and hope you like sweet home.

“Your loving

“ERMI.

“There are many nice English here and some awful ones, just like Mrs. W—. I hate to write that name. Give my love to your mother and Lilly. The Empress of Austria is coming here to Karersee.”

grêle it was aful on the hils all was whit. When chell I goet a letter from my god old Pig ? . . . I hop soon. We ar all verry well. Madame is making verry large pramenads and is so well that I kant belev it, I fink sch is better than in Laxenburg. I know nafing from ouer dear Roza I hop sche es well. I fink sche is so sad sche kant rit.

“I rod you a enof log letter. I hop ! . . . I wisch to becom wone how is as long as that won.

“I embrasse You My Dear Good Masie of all my hart and hope you lik swed home.

“Your loeving

“ERZSI.

“Karersee, July 25th, 1897.

“There ar mamy nice Engitsch her and 2 aful wons gust lik Missis W——. I hat t rit that nam. Say my loeve ta mother and Lilly. The Imperatrisse af Autriche is komming here to Karersee.”

I was pleased that she was so delighted with Karersee, and that she seemed so well. In fact, the place apparently agreed with the entire suite, as I had at the same time a letter from Madame de Touzet, saying how well and strong she was. The Archduchess speaks of her sometimes as “Mamie.” Then came the letter of August 3rd, saying they were ordered away because of the coming of the Empress Elizabeth, the Archduchess’s grandmother.

Now I, like the Archduchess and the others of her suite, looked on this as nothing more or less than one of the mad caprices of the Empress, and we all knew of her intense dislike to her little granddaughter, and felt sad that the child's pleasure was to be spoiled because her grandmother would not tolerate her under the same roof. But lately I read the book written by the Countess Zandi, and idly it occurred to me that it would be amusing to compare the dates of the Archduchess's letters and my own diaries, to see how they tallied. In this instance, I must confess I received a shock, as it proved not caprice, but duplicity on the part of the Empress, for in the Countess Zandi's account, she says: "On August 15th, 1897, I arrived at Karersee, where Mother has already been a few days." On the 7th the Archduchess and her suite were—to use an actual translation of her words—"chassed" away from Karersee, because "L'Imperatrice de *Autriche* is coming here."

"Karersee Hotel,

"Tirol,

"August 3rd, 1897.

"MY DEAR M.,*

"Tenk you very much for yor god letters. I meest tell you a very sad neuse (nouvelle). Nous

* "MY DEAR M.,

"Thank you very much for your good letters. I must tell you some very sad news. We must leave here on the 5th for Trafoi. We

partons le 5 dici pour Trafoi. Nous sommes touse desolée surtou pour la resons qui nous chasse dici. Je ne tous dit pas plus ceulment que sa Majestat le 'Imperatrie viens ici! Je suis sur que vous comprenez et que vous aurez la grande bonte de ne pas en parlez. N'est ce-pas ces terrible? Nous allons le 6 a Meran, la nous retrouvons Maman et nous partons de la a Trafoi. C'est 8 heures en voitur de Meran. Je vous pries de penser un peu a nous! Vous esperons de retournez l'annee prochaine ici dans ce chère chère Karersee. Le temps est superbes, croit warm. Nous jouons au Tennis and we make large work. I rit in frensch becouse it gose cwiker.

"I embresse You.

"Your loeving

"ERZSI."

are all desolated, above all because of reason which drives us from here. I cannot tell you more, except that Her Majesty, the Empress, comes here. I am sure that you understand, and that you will have the great kindness not to mention it. Isn't it terrible? We go the 6th to Meran. There we shall find Mama, and from there we go to Trafoi. It is eight hours by carriage from Meran! I beg you will think a little of us. We hope to return here next year, to this dear, dear Karersee. The weather is superb, nearly warm. We play tennis and take long walks. I write in French because it goes quicker.

"I embrace you.

"Your loving

"ERZSI."

"Hotel Trafoi,
"Tirol.

"MY DEAR M.,*

"I has to fank you for your nice letters. Our dear Rosa is bak sche is riting you to. Here it is a beautiful place but not to reman, all the helse ar to nere surtout le glacier. It is not so nice as Karersee. You say in your letter, 'You have been such a traveller.' Wath will you say wen you her that we ar going to Suisse and to the north of Italie. All in carige (en voiture), but anle went te wetter is nice, sensa pas. J'ai très peur qu'il pleure ! Then après le voyage en Suisselent we dont com her but go t do the Mendel. I am verrey happe becaucos we ar going lundi en Suisse !

"I vous embrasse de tout coeur.

"Votre loeving,
"ERZSI."

"Trafoi, August the 13th, 1897."

* "MY DEAR M.,

"I have to thank you for your nice letters. Our dear Rosa is back. She is writing you too. Here is a beautiful place, but not to stay all the time. The hills are too near, and mostly covered with ice. It is not so nice as Karersee. You say in your letter that you have been such a traveller. What will you say when you hear that we are going to Switzerland and the north of Italy—all by carriage, if the weather is fine. I have much fear it will rain. Then, after the journey to Switzerland, we do not return here, but go on to Mendel. I am very happy because we are going Monday to Switzerland.

"I embrace you with all my heart.

"Your loving
"ERZSI."

I learned to ride a bicycle while in England, and bought one to take back to Vienna. The craze was at its height in England, but as yet had not reached Vienna. There I returned the first week of September.

“Laxenburg, bei Wien,

“September 6th, 1897.

“8.55 a.m.

“DEAREST VER,

“Here I am, just arrived and waiting for my bath till my maid comes back from sending your telegram. You will understand from the telegram that the Archduchess comes to-morrow at 9 a.m. I hear she only travelled a few days, and has been with Madame de Touzet all the rest of the time, and they are returning together. I hear also that they sent back the Archduchess's and Countess's footmen, but that the expenses have been *awful*.

“My rooms are so fresh and clean and full of flowers. The Captain of the Castle was in my room here at 7 a.m. this morning to see all was nice for me. He has had a bell put to my dinner-table, so now I have two in my drawing-room, one on the writing-table also. I got to Vienna at 7.45. The man was waiting there, but there were no trains on to Laxenburg, so we had to wait two hours before I got here.

“When I left Lily at Victoria, I was very anxious about her getting home all right. When I got to Dover, I found a wet, rough night. The boat rocked



THE ROYAL GOVERNESS.

horribly all the time, but I never felt in the least ill. At Ostend, I got a carriage to myself and slept well, but it was bitterly cold, and the train was very late at the frontier. At Cologne, I ran quickly to the cathedral and heard part of a Mass ; we were so late I could not wait for another. At Frankfort, we ought to have stopped twenty-nine minutes for dinner, but we were so late we only stopped five. My hat fell off and went under the train, but it was safely rescued, so I left it in the carriage and went quickly to the buffet and got some bread and ham, which I ate in the carriage, with some sherry. At Wurtzburg I got some coffee, and a horrid woman and boy got in. The boy played about the whole time and kept falling over me, and I was so tired and cross that at Nürnberg the guard tried to get me into another carriage. As there were two ladies' carriages, and the train was so full, I would not move, and we had a great row.

“ At the Austrian frontier I had a little trouble with my boxes, as the man found a few cigarettes I had, and hunted for more. Then I got a *coupé* all to myself, and this morning I had another row with the guard, who wanted me to pay eight shillings extra. I let him go on for some time, and then calmly got out my pass as a member of the Royal suite. He collapsed. I slept pretty well after that to Vienna, though it was awfully cold. They say it has been very cold here, but it seems very hot to me. I find I have a very nice black straw hat I can wear till my

other comes. I forgot it, because it is all black and I have only worn it for mourning so far, but it will save me the bother of getting one. I hear my rooms at the Palace are all upset, being painted, etc. I hope they will soon be finished. I hear the Archduchess will be here at 9.15 to-morrow morning.

"I found the enclosed letter from Wanda waiting for me; I know you will be interested to see it. I conclude from what she says in it that she will be married in Vienna. I will tell you more after I have seen her. I must finish now. What a happy time we had together. I wish I had not enjoyed myself so much. It makes me so dreadfully homesick.

"Fondest love, darling mother,

"From

"M."

"K. u. K. Schloss,

"Laxenburg, bei Wien,

"Austria,

"September 8th, 1897.

"MY DEAREST VER,

"Thanks very much for your nice kind letter I received this morning. I did not get out yesterday for a walk till past five, and I had nothing to do but wait lest I should be wanted. The Archduchess sent me some lovely fruit yesterday, so very large and ripe. I don't know what it would have cost in England. Peaches, grapes, melon, figs, apples and pears—a large silver dish full. It was sad to eat them alone. We should have enjoyed them together.

I think I miss the good English food. One eats so carelessly when one is alone, and sometimes I can hardly eat at all.

“Last evening the Countess came in and sat a bit with me. She was awfully kind and asked a lot about you. Madame also came to my rooms yesterday afternoon and is very pleasant, but I see she will not let me be much with the Archduchess. I think there must have been a row at Boyen before the Crown Princess left last Friday. Madame told me she had not slept well for a week, and everyone says before that time she was so well. No doubt I shall get to know all in time. This afternoon the Archduchess goes with the Countess to Baden, and I shall try and call on the wife of the Captain of the Castle, and then go for a walk.

“The Archduchess and the Countess admired my Newport hat very much ; in fact, all my things are a great success so far. I wish I had Lily to help me choose always. The Archduchess likes her vase very much, and she was also given the Jubilee plate and flag pincushion. She seemed very pleased and carried them off from my room in triumph. She also ate some of my sweets, having paid me a visit unknown to everyone. She is very nice and affectionate and seems to be very happy with me. You can imagine there are little jealous attacks from the others sometimes, but no one dares say anything to me before the Archduchess, as she takes my part so violently, and is so naughty.

"Later. I have just had a long visit from the Archduchess. Madame is asleep after dinner, and she got one of her maids to bring her down. She is so affectionate whenever she can get to me. I told her that most likely next autumn you would come out to me. She hopes you will, and Lily, too. I hear she did no lessons while she was away, and she told me to-day, quite airily, that she did not think she would do any more *regular* lessons, only some now and then! The fact is, Madame can do nothing now, and the child has quite the upper hand. Perhaps the Crown Princess will be in London next week.

"With fondest love, dearest Ver, believe me ever
"Your most loving
"M."

"K. u. K. Schloss,
"Laxenburg, bei Vienna,
"September 15th, 1897.

"MY DEAREST VER,

"Yesterday the Countess and I drove into Vienna (in one of the 'Imperial carriages' Aunt Sarah is so fond of talking about). We left here after breakfast at 8 a.m., you know how early we are here, and got to Vienna at nine. We went with the idea of finding bicycles for a month, as the Countess wants to learn also. But they are very difficult to hire here. The man who is teaching us will try to-morrow. I also saw my new drawing-room in the Palace, and was very pleased with it The

Countess and I then left Vienna and drove back here about one o'clock.

"The Countess has a bicycle lesson twice a day. She cannot go alone yet. The other day the Archduchess and I were watching her, and when she got off the bicycle, the Archduchess simply got on and rode off! The Countess and I were stupefied, as you can imagine. It seems that three years ago she tried with the Duchess of Cumberland's children, and she had not forgotten. But it was exasperating for the Countess and me, after all our efforts, and the child watching us fall about and never saying a word till now! The Crown Princess is still away and I think she will spend a day or two in England, but *not* go to the Queen, so I hear. But it may all be changed. Madame is cross, so I keep out of her way. The Archduchess is very anxious I should have a plum-pudding cooked, and I promised that *perhaps* to-morrow I would.

"With fondest love,

"From your

"M."

"Laxenburg,

"*Thursday, September 23rd, 1897.*

"MY DEAREST VER,

"Thank you so much for your kind letter received yesterday. I am so glad you keep well and feel stronger; I hope by degrees you will get really strong and well. The night before last, at about 9.30 p.m., the Countess wrote me a few lines

to say she was going into Vienna the next morning by carriage, and would I not profit by the occasion to go and see the Badenis. So I did, and found the Countess Badeni and Wanda together. They seemed both awfully pleased to see me, and the Countess said I must come as often as possible before Wanda marries, and as often as ever when she is gone, as the Countess will be so much alone.

“Wanda, of course, is dreadfully absorbed. She quickly ran through how it all came about. The Count Krasinski had only seen her three times when he made up his mind he would like to marry her. He is twenty-seven. I should think very lively, full of spirits and youth, and Wanda’s gay manner is just what he likes. She says he is very clever and seems very attached. Wanda also says she is very much in love, but I do *not* think the love would be so strong if he were not such a thoroughly good *parti*. He is really of much higher birth and position among the Poles than Wanda. He comes here to Vienna on October 1st, and stays till the marriage on the 28th in the Cathedral in Vienna. I do not think I shall go as the Emperor and Archdukes will be there, and I do not feel that I can afford the expensive new dress I should have to buy. When they are married they mean to go first to Warsaw for two days, that Wanda may be introduced to all the employees at the Krasinski Palace, which is magnificent. It is historic, and is open on certain days to the public. Then they go to his estates



COUNTESS WANDA AT THE KRASINSKI PALACE, WARSAW.

about two miles and a half from Warsaw, for a few weeks. After which they go to see his sister for a few weeks, who is ill in Davos Platz in Switzerland, then through Italy to Egypt for the winter, and home via Rome, and back for Easter. Then Wanda is afraid her husband will want to open the Palace in Warsaw and entertain, and she would like to go to the country.

“Wanda thinks now that she will never want anyone but her husband. She says she shall never come to Vienna or Büsk, it is so far, and the frontier so difficult to cross. She rather disappointed me by being so very much absorbed. He has given her the most magnificent jewellery; her engagement ring is an enormous sapphire set in diamonds; it stands out so far, I would really be afraid to lose it. Necklaces, bracelets, brooches in heaps, and really all perfectly beautiful. Now, you have had enough about the Badenis.

“The Countess Coudenhove went out by herself on the bicycle for the first time to-day. I do not go outside the ‘shut in’ part of the park, but round and round in every road that is flat. The ‘shut in’ part is very large. I am glad ‘the bird’ keeps well; perhaps it won’t feel the cold as much as you think.

“Now, good-night, dearest Ver.

“With fondest love,

“From

“M.

“P.S.—I lunch with the Badenis on Sunday, when I shall hear a lot more.”

Little did any of us think of the momentous events which were to transpire in the course of the next few days. Count Badeni was having more and more difficulties in his efforts to bring about a fair compromise between the conflicting claims of the nationalities. Every move which he made was looked upon as antagonistic by the opposing party. Herr Wolff, the German leader, grew more and more personally abusive. Finally, the day following my visit to the Badenis, during a hot argument with regard to the right to bring in constables on behalf of the Government at political meetings, he jumped to his feet, and, in the midst of Count Badeni's speech, interrupted, shaking his fist at the Count, and shouting above the noise and clamour of the rest of his party :

“ If you did this, it is a piece of Polish scoundrelism ! ”

This was too much for the Count Badeni, who was, in the first place, a very proud man, and, secondly, hot-tempered. He, at once, sent his resignation to the Emperor and desired his permission to challenge Herr Wolff to a duel. The first the Emperor refused to accept. The second he gladly gave his consent to, doubtless thinking to secure greater respect for the Count Badeni. But it was a mistake. Wolff should never have been acknowledged as sufficiently Count Badeni's equal to fight him.

The duel took place in the Imperial Riding School, and was with pistols. Wolff wounded the Count in the arm, shattering his elbow. The arm was, of

course, dressed instantly by the attending physician, and Count Badeni was taken home in his carriage, to which he walked without aid, despite the remonstrances of his friends.

I did not hear of the duel until early the next morning, which was the Sunday I had arranged to lunch there. I at once hastened to Vienna and to the Badenis to inquire. There I was told that the first thing the Count said upon awakening at seven o'clock that morning was to order his valet to :

“Bring me the newspapers. I should like to see how I am getting on,” which was exactly what one, knowing Count Badeni, would have expected him to say.

On the 29th I wrote to my mother :

“I hear the Count Badeni is going on well, and hopes to be in Parliament to-morrow. All the laws, over which there was so much difficulty, are passing quite easily now.”

The Count did return to Parliament, and to a revulsion of feeling amongst not only the opposition party, but the very populace, who greeted him with cheers and applause. His carriage could scarcely get through the streets, both going and returning, and it may well be imagined that this appreciation of bravery—both moral and physical—in the hated Prime Minister, was as gall and wormwood to the German Nationalists, whose leader Wolff was. For some time after this the Count Badeni had things his own way in pursuing his policy, but it was only for a

time. The plotters were working against him in every conceivable underhanded way, determined to bring about his fall.

“Laxenburg,

“*Tuesday, October 5th, 1897.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“Yesterday I was in Vienna and saw the Count and Countess Badeni and Wanda. The Count is better, though he does not sleep well, and looks worn and pale. The wound is not closed yet, and sometimes he hurts it with quick movements.

“Wanda’s fiancé is still ill; she goes with her mother on Friday to stay with his mother, where he now is. They all hope to return to Vienna the 14th, but if he is not better, the wedding must be put off. I cannot understand how they are so contented with it all. Wanda really hardly knows her fiancé. They have been together four days and three visits of about an hour in Vienna. I told Wanda yesterday he would have some surprises after he is married, and she said :

“‘No doubt I shall, too.’

“They write to each other very often and long letters. Everyone says he is *very* nice. The Countess has ordered a sealskin cape for Wanda, at P——’s, in London. It is to be lined with ermine, and to cost seven hundred florins—nearly sixty pounds—the highest price they asked, so it ought to be perfect skins. I think very likely she will also have a muff.

“Wanda told me yesterday she should write to me

very seldom after she is married. How little we can tell now ; perhaps she will be only too glad to be friends with me later. She is very affectionate, but thinks she and 'Adam' will be always enough for each other. As I said to Lily : 'Wait till they are used to each other.'

"I am glad 'the bird' seems to thrive on his new food. He seems to be moulting a very long time, but I don't understand birds.

"The Crown Princess gave me permission at once to ride in the open park. The people seemed so astonished to see me. I am so *thankful* I learnt in England. I never should have learnt here, I am sure. I am going to have my dinner now, so good-bye.

"I have an Austrian dinner : sliced red cabbage, meat chopped very fine with herbs, etc., and made into a shape, stewed tomatoes, plum-pudding (yours), grapes and peaches.

"With best love, darling Ver,

"From

"M."

During the visit to the Badenis which I mention above, I met Father Paveliski, a Polish monk, belonging to the Order of the Resurrectionists—an order in Poland, more political than religious. At this time they were very prominent in Austria-Hungary, and the Government had been obliged to place one of them, Father Stojloffski, under arrest some time before, because of the inflammatory speeches he was

making in Hungary. This Father Paveliski had enormous influence with the highest families in Poland, and arranged more marriages than any professional match-maker could succeed in carrying through. He had a charming personality and a great wit, although I was not sufficiently proficient in the Polish language to properly appreciate all that he said.

It had been a severe blow to the German party to find the popular faith inspired by Count Badeni after his duel with the man Wolff. Every means was taken to undermine him. Wolff denied the words imputed him which brought about the duel, and in his pan-Germanic organ, the *Ostaentsche Rundschau*, stated that he said, "This is a piece of blackguardism." Then, on October 14th, they launched a poisoned arrow in the proposition for a motion by Wolff to impeach Count Badeni, basing his motion upon an alleged illegality of a ministerial instruction, issued some time before.

This came as a bolt from the blue to the Count, who indignantly protested against it. But again, the weathercock of Parliamentary feeling had veered around, and the Prime Minister was noisily and viciously interrupted more than once. Through all this, the Emperor stood firmly behind Count Badeni, and it was hoped by his friends would not yield to any outside pressure.

Wanda was married, as had been planned, and the wedding was carried out with great gorgeousness. The Emperor was present and the Archdukes. I did

go after all, as Wanda seemed to really want me. For some reason I never could fathom, unless it was pure jealousy, the Badenis had never been popular at Court, and the Countess and Madame never let an opportunity pass for adverse criticism of them in my presence, and it was with joy they came to tell me of the signs of the Count's impending fall. The Countess Coudenhove in particular seemed to dislike them and although a few days before his resignation was accepted she had attended a large dinner at his house, she did not hesitate to criticize it most malignantly to me, though no one could deny that Count Badeni gave the hospitality, which she had accepted, with a lavishness exceeded by few.

When the Sunday came (the Count resigned that day), the troops, who were holding the streets, were attacked by a furious mob. Then the Palace gates were shut and everyone was told to stay within, or go out at their own risk. I felt I must go to these good friends of mine, and as I was "off duty," I went quietly by train into Vienna. As I had been to Mass, and had complained of headache, my absence was not noted.

Arrived in Vienna, I went at once on foot to the Ministerium, the official Palace of the Prime Minister. On the way I met a squadron of Hussars guarding the Count Badeni's carriage as he drove to the Hofburg to see the Emperor. They were coming at full gallop, forcing a way through the menacing mob which filled the narrow Kolmart. I was obliged to flatten myself

against a stone wall, as otherwise I should have been crushed to death. The Count's face was pale and a trifle scornful, but the blue circles about his eyes showed me, in the brief glimpse I had as he passed, something of the tremendous mental strain he was undergoing.

When I arrived at the Palace, I found it guarded by troops, and neither arguments, blandishments, nor bribes would gain me admittance, until one of the officers luckily recognized me. Inside, I found the wildest confusion reigning. The Countess was furiously directing the packing, herself tearing tapestries from the walls, the servants feverishly cramming them into boxes, and she told me, with tears of rage that the newly-appointed Minister had just sent a very rude message, saying he wanted the Palace by Thursday. But nothing remained of the Badenis after Tuesday.

Upon my return to Laxenburg, I found this note from the Countess Coudenhove, whose spite was certainly stronger than her English :

“ Count Badeni gave his demission and he is gone. The newest news.—E. C.”

That evening I was obliged to submit to a visit from her, and listen while she told me a long tale of the Count's infatuation for a certain lady. This lady, it seems, was in the pay of the German party, her task being to get sufficient proof of a sort that could be

placed before the Emperor, and practically force him to withdraw his support from the Count.

This nice-minded and extremely moral lady made a flying trip to Paris under the rose, in the company of the Count, and the while she exerted all her powers of fascination, and succeeded in extracting certain State secrets from him. This was at once reported to the leaders of the Opposition, and a statement placed before the Emperor, who now had no choice but to demand the Count's resignation. I did not argue the points, but it is a well-known fact that when the Emperor finds his Ministers in difficulties, even through obeying his express orders, he always deserts them, and certainly he took his support from the Count Badeni very abruptly.

" Laxenburg,
" *Sunday*.

" MY DEAREST VER,

" Are you not sorry for the Badenis? It came so quickly, and was such an awful smash-up at the end. They packed as quickly as possible and left Vienna last Tuesday, going for a few days to Warsaw to see Wanda, then to Büsk for three weeks, and then the Count and Countess to Italy.

" I hope later the Count will be Governor of Galicia again, as he was when I was with them. It is a dreadful downfall, and has left things in such a bad state behind. The Count said we should have an outbreak in Vienna before March, and we seem well

on the way to a revolution. I am *very* sorry, as I shall quite lose Wanda and all of them. They will never come to Vienna now.

"It is not quite so cold again, and I ride as much as I can. It will not last fine enough much longer, and we go to Vienna in a fortnight. I play a lot of croquet now, and am the only person who can beat the Archduchess.

"The Archduchess asked me to tell you that birds *never* take baths when they are moulting. This is to excuse the bird's dirty habits in the summer. My belief is he is a dirty little beast. I wonder if he takes his bath now? I imagine *not* by your silence on the point!

"Love, dearest Ver,

"From

"M."

"Rome,

"23rd November.

"MY DEAR M.,

"I have two of your letters and I am feeling quite remorseful to have given you trouble at a time when you were particularly busy. I did get the catalogue, thanks!

"Now, as to the incident of the telegram, my dear M. Of course, I wish the Countess Coudenhove had not got into a temper; I also wish my husband had put *Palais Albrecht* on his telegram. But (as he says) 'that lady must be a goose,' for such mistakes surely occur often on St. Elizabeth's Day. There

are three Archduchesses whose feast it is, for it is that of Arch. Isabella too. I don't think it is worth while for you to lose *peace* on account of such a foolish fuss about nothing. *Tant pis pour elle*, Archd. Elizabeth (ours) sent a nice reply, only, of course, it was a bit slower than if the telegram had not gone wrong first.

"You know, dear M., I like you to say all you like to me, and I hope it may be a relief to you to do so. I quite see you are worried by many small things, which are like *gnats*—they *sting*, and by their multiplicity become a real trouble. But, then, if you have these contradictions, I believe it is *because your Imperial pupil* loves you and others are jealous. That is inevitable, but really you should not think so much about it.

"Poor Madame has a bad complaint, has she not? I can fancy how disagreeable she may make herself, but then, she may be suffering, and, anyhow, she is a poor old woman who is not far from the end of her career.

"I am sorry about Count Badeni because of *you*, but you can stand on your own ground better now.

"Good-bye, dear M. Monsignor is just back. He is well, T.G. Maria sends her love. I will pray for you. Do you remember me, who am truly

"Your affectionate

"I. M. DEL V."

CHAPTER XXIV

“K. u. K. Hofburg,
“Vienna, Austria.

“MY DEAREST VER,

“Thanks for your kind letter received with Lily’s yesterday. I am now in Vienna, but I never had such an uncomfortable move as this. One of my cases is lost for the present ; my black box would not unlock last night, and my maid could not sleep in her new bed. I begged her to take the dinner to-day from an hotel, but she insisted upon going to the market and buying it to cook herself. While she was out, I felt cold and tried to light my drawing-room fire. When she came back and saw what I had done (the fire would not burn), she took it all away, and said I was using kitchen wood. She has made a fire now, and I am sitting, ashamed, at my davenport. She is very anxious to try my new cooking stove, and I know that is why she bought the things to make my dinner, but she *pretends* I do not like the hotel cooking as much as hers.

“The Emperor is holding a reception, so the square is full of carriages, but I do not watch them, as I

know that Count Badeni's will not come. They are in the country now, and they tell me the Count is so miserable with nothing to do. I miss them dreadfully. The new Master of Ceremonies to the Crown Princess is a cousin of the Count Badeni, so I shall hear of them sometimes. His wife, Countess Chornewiscka, is very friendly with me. I had tea with them on Tuesday.

"I am delighted 'the bird' has so reformed, and I can see it is a great pleasure to you. I should like to have one, but there is so little sun in my room I am afraid he would find it dull. I have had just a hint that I may be able to come home next summer

"With fondest love,

"Ever your loving

"M."

Christmas shopping occupied the Archduchess's time and mind at this season. Each day we went to buy the things she wished to choose for presents, and came back having spent the money on herself, so I wondered where the Christmas gifts would come in. One day she told me she would like a box of oil paints for one of her Christmas presents, and asked how much it would cost. I told her about twelve gulden (twenty-five shillings). She looked very sad and thoughtful for a moment, then she said:

"Grandpapa is giving me silver table ornaments and a horse; do you think he would be able to afford the box of paints as well?"

: She had absolutely *no* idea of relative value.

One afternoon some person told her that one of her Habsburg cousins had married a dressmaker, and when I came for service, she was full of it, and most anxious to see what effect the news would have upon me. We stood at her window looking out over Vienna, all lit up in the winter's evening.

She waved her hand towards the city, and remarked :

“Now, all the dressmakers in Vienna are my relations, I suppose !”

Just before Christmas the Crown Princess decided to go to Dresden to visit Princess Louise, Crown Princess of Saxony, as they were at this time great friends, but there were some differences. I gathered from the suite that the arrangements were not considered worthy of our Archduchess, and the next I heard was a card from the Archduchess from Munich.

On the 20th I had this letter from Regensburg :

“Schloss St. Emmeram,

“Regensburg,

“*December 20th, 1897.*

“DEAR M.,

“I am verry happy. I ameus myself verry well. In München we had too days sans un seul nuage, boutifule. Her it is verry nice, the Castle is splendid. Thar is a room wher all the furnitcher (les meubles et le lustre) is in reall silver.

"Aujourd'hui temps superbe.

'Bes loeves and kisses,

"From your

"ERZSI.

"Je pense que vous savez que nous partons le h 6
pour Walsee de nouveau."

"K. u. K. Hofburg,

"Vienna,

"December 22nd, 1897.

"MY DEAREST VER,

"The Archduchess has not come back; she was to have been here at seven this morning, but a telegram came late last night saying that the Crown Princess is not well and they stay in Munich till the 24th. So the chance of good presents seems very small this year. The Crown Princess has inflammation in her face. In an ordinary person, it would be called bad toothache, but she hates all these things, as they make her look old, and she poses as a girl. There is a grand dinner here to-night. The Emperor gives it to the Ambassadors.

"To-day I have been to a large Christmas market. It was very interesting to see.

"With fondest love, dearest Ver,

"From

"M."

"K. u. K. Hofburg,

"Vienna,

"December 31st, 1897.

"MY DEAREST VER,

"I am sure you will like^v to hear what the

Archduchess gave me for my Christmas presents. First a very handsome gold bracelet set with three sapphires and six diamonds, the handsomest piece of jewellery I have ever had. Then a basket case for my bicycle, taking it all in as it stands, handles and all. I wanted it very much when my bicycle travelled. Then a very pretty leather bag for the handles of the bicycle, with a clock let in, so one can always see the time when one rides; two pretty vases, a china dish, a card-case (*very* nice), two boxes of fancy paper (which I *never* use), a little china pig and some sweets. On the whole, I am very contented this year; much more than last, though the Crown Princess gave me nothing this year. The Countess, as usual, did very well with solid silver tea and coffee pots, milk, sugar, etc.

“Fondest love, dearest of mothers,

“From your

“M.”

Shortly after Christmas I began to hear again of Count Lonyay's attentions to our Crown Princess. There were so many difficulties in the way that none of us thought for an instant it was anything serious. He was considerably younger than she was: he was of a strictly Calvinistic family, not that that would matter much to the Princess Stephanie, who was not really religious; also, she would have to renounce all maternal rights over the little Archduchess, nor would that matter to her particularly.

But what would matter was the dowry. King Leopold would have nothing to do with her, so she was entirely dependent upon the Emperor's charity.

Count Lonyay was not a rich man by any means, not even of the nobility. But Stephanie was most anxious to get married, and she was so disliked by her late husband's family, that almost any source of relief was welcomed. Then came the question of religion. Lonyay being a Protestant and refusing to change, she decided to leave her Church. This, of course, was not what the Emperor could approve of. But as Lonyay was an Anglomaniac and lived much in England, Stephanie also professed a great love for that country, and said they would go there to live. But the Prince of Wales did not like her, and Queen Victoria was shocked at her proposed marriage, as she did not approve of second marriages in any case, but a *mésalliance* such as this won only the strongest censure from her.

Under these circumstances, Stephanie concluded that she did not like England so well after all, and she would go to Hungary and live in the Lonyay Castle. Then the Emperor was properly scandalized, as they did not want her in Hungary any more than they wanted her in Austria. So the whole thing seemed to blow over and we thought the idea given up. Then, in March, the Crown Princess was taken very ill—influenza and double pneumonia. One night she was so bad that the Emperor was called in the middle of the night. He inquired at once if

“extreme unction” had been given, and when told it had not, he turned to the priest who had been called, and asked if he “had his instruments with him?” referring to the sacred vessels in these extraordinary terms.

“K. u. K. Hofburg,

“Vienna,

“*March 5th, 1898.*

“MY DEAREST VER,

“The poor Archduchess Stephanie is *very* bad. In the night they expected her to die from one minute to another; both lungs inflamed, and danger from choking. I have just telegraphed to the Queen, who is most interested in the case, and telegraphs and sends the Ambassador often. Perhaps you will see later news in the papers. She confessed and received the Last Sacraments in the night, so she is peaceful and knows how bad she is.

“Our poor little Archduchess is quite ill from anxiety and shock. She was not allowed to leave her bed all day, so has not seen her mother so bad. The change came last night.

“Best love from

“M.”

The fiftieth anniversary of the Emperor's accession to the throne was the 7th of May. The strain of the political situation was very tense: there were loud murmurings in industrial circles, and many feared



From a photograph.
THE ARCHDUCHESS ELIZABETH.



revolution. The Emperor, therefore, expressly desired that there should not be any pomp or display which would entail unnecessary expenditure. The great exhibition was to be the sole public celebration of this jubilee. It was under the patronage of the Archduke Otto—called the “Handsome Archduke” by the Austrians—nephew of the Emperor, and brother of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir-apparent.

Hungary was to have rather more festivities at Buda-Pest a few days later, and there the Crown Princess proposed to take our Archduchess.

“Hofburg,
“Vienna.

“MY DEAREST VER,

“The Archduchess leaves this evening—that is to say, if the Crown Princess is well enough to go to the Pesth festivities; if not, they go together to Fries to-morrow. That is exactly like the Court—an enormous journey, lots of people going together—at least twenty—and no one knowing until the last minute whether they go to-day or to-morrow. The Crown Princess has had a sore throat and cough, and *will* go out every night to balls, etc. Now, she seems afraid to go to Pesth when it will be really worth while going, and here she dances about with young boys.

“The Archduchess wishes me to assure you she is

not fiancéed with the King of Spain. Her expression is: 'He won't get me;' and I don't think he will.

"Good-bye, dearest Ver.

"From your loving,

"M."

"Hotel Belle-Vue,

"Lago di Como,

"Italy,

"May 7th, 1898.

"MY DEAR M.,

"I feel very guilty for not having answered till to-day your last letters which I got in Davos and in Cairo. I hope though, you shall excuse me when I will tell you that I think very often at my 'dear old May,' that I had not much time left for correspondence in Egypt, and that I was obliged to write once or twice a week to my parents and to my mother-in-law. Since a few months I am doing very little, but looking very much, and I can say I saw things extremely interesting, and beautiful. We have spent two months and a half in Egypt. We travelled four weeks on the Nile with my husband's relations, Count and Countess Branicki, their eldest daughter, Maja Lumouirska, and her husband, and their youngest daughter, sixteen years old. We had a little steamer all for ourselves, and we were stopping where and whenever we liked; we visited nearly all the interesting spots of upper Egypt till Assouan (that is the first cataract). I cannot tell

you what a delightful feeling we had crossing the cataracts in a little boat.

“During our stay in Assouan, we allowed us this pleasure thrice—once by storm and twice by the most lovely weather. The quantity and dimensions of the ruins in Upper Egypt is really wonderful, but it would take too long to relate you all about them. We spent in April three weeks in Cairo, there everything is ‘English,’ and it is awful to see how your cupide (greedy) compatriots tear this land out of the hands of the poor Arabs.

“We are since a few days on the Lago di Como. It is a true paradys; from our windows we look on Bellegio, on the lac and the mountains. In the air there is a lovely scent of roses, and the gardens of the different hotels and villas in Cadenabbia are full of flowers. Monday we are leaving this nice spot for Weggis (in Switzerland), where we shall meet with my mother- and sister-in-law, about the 15th. We will stop one day in Vienna and from there go to Cracow, Büsk and Warsaw. I am quite charmed with my travel, but I shall feel glad to see my parents again and then to find myself at home. I do not know yet quite well the house of Warsaw!

“It is true I had *no* illusions about the life, neither about the married life, you know it quite well, but, now, I see (from my own experience) that it can be a nice and happy thing, when one has such a thoroughly good, clever, sensible and loving husband as Providence gave me.

without pomp or display was that the Empress had refused to take any part in the celebrations, and the Emperor did not wish to give rise to criticism of her whom he loved so well. The Empress's secretive-ness had been frequently the cause to the Emperor of an embarrassment amounting almost to humiliation. When she was assassinated, she was supposed to be stopping at Montreux. In fact, the Emperor had received a letter from her only that morning. Therefore, it was a double shock to find that she had been staying in Geneva.

When Count Goluchowski approached His Majesty and, as gently as possible, told him the terrible news, the Emperor stood as one frozen for a second ; then, as the true import of the words reached his benumbed brain, he sank into his chair, beside which he had been standing to receive the communication, and, bowing his aged head upon his arms, cried in quavering tones :

“ Am I to be spared *nothing* ? ”

A commission of high officials at once left for Geneva and there took charge of the body, and returned with it to Vienna. The cortège arrived at the Hofburg with the body of the dead Empress at about 10.30 on the evening of the Thursday following her assassination, and, lighted by torches, as is the Imperial custom, was escorted to the 'Burg Chapel. There, with the Emperor and all the Imperial Family, the household attended the ceremony of the Blessing of the Corpse, after which the casket

was locked, and the key consigned to the chief Court Marshal. A plate of glass let into the coffin permitted us to look upon those beautiful features—beautiful in life, and now in death more lovely with an expression of deep and lasting peace upon them—the peace she had been always seeking, she had found at last. Alone she had lived of her own choice—alone she had died. She had no confidants. What she had felt, thought or suffered had died with her. Only to the last, the—to her—hateful Austrian Court ceremonials pursued her; for now that protective halo of love which her husband had ever thrown around her could no more avail to save her, and accordingly she was buried with all the pomp one expected for an Empress, and laid in the Habsburg vault in the Church of the Capucine Friars which she had so cordially disliked—that loathsome tomb, filled to overflowing with dead and gone Habsburgs, so crowded, that in order to make room for the Empress to lie beside her only son, the Crown Prince Rudolph, it was necessary to remove the bodies of the Archduke Karl Ludwig, and the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico.

After the funeral, the Emperor ordered that the chemise worn by the Empress when she was stabbed should be put in a glass case and shown in the Palace. The hole made by the assassin's knife was almost incredibly small, not more than an inch in diameter, and there was only one tiny spot of blood.

There was, in the Empress's suite, a Mademoiselle

Ferency, a Hungarian and a great favourite of the Empress. She was a clever woman, and studied English, French and German in order to read to the Empress—in fact did all she could to render herself indispensable to Her Imperial Majesty. The Imperial Family did not care for Mademoiselle, and immediately after the death of the Empress she was ordered to leave her rooms in the Palace. This rendered her furious, and she is supposed to have written “The Martyrdom of an Empress” out of revenge.

CHAPTER XXV

THE end of 1898 saw the severance of my connection with the Austrian Court. The Archduchess was by then old enough to cease her lessons, and a suite of ladies-in-waiting was appointed for her.

The Countess Coudenhove (I quote from a letter to my mother) "really entered a convent this last August. Poor nuns!!" Madame de Touzet retired to Ling, on her pension, and died soon after. Poor old soul! She gave me many a bad quarter of an hour. The Court was the breath of life to her; she could not live away from it.

Eventually the Crown Princess Stephanie married Count Lonyay. The Emperor was most kind to her. He gave her a wonderful trousseau, which required a special train to take it from Vienna. Of course Count Lonyay eventually came into the Roman Church and thus eliminated the obstacle of difference in religion. As for my little Archduchess, she very soon settled her own destiny. One night, at a Court ball, she saw and danced with Prince Otto Windischgrätz. The next day she went to her

Royal grandpapa and decisively announced that she wished to marry the said gentleman. The kind old Emperor, whose dearest wish is to have everyone about him quite happy, sent for the young man, and, smiling, informed him of the honour which he was about to bestow upon him, in the form of his granddaughter's hand in marriage. The young officer was overwhelmed; he blushed, stammered and bowed. The Emperor, thinking all this emotion was gratitude for the honour he was about to receive, beamed upon him, and, waving his hand, said gently: "It is all quite settled; you may go to her." Then the deeply confused and equally distressed officer burst out: "Pardon, sir, but I am fiancéed already."

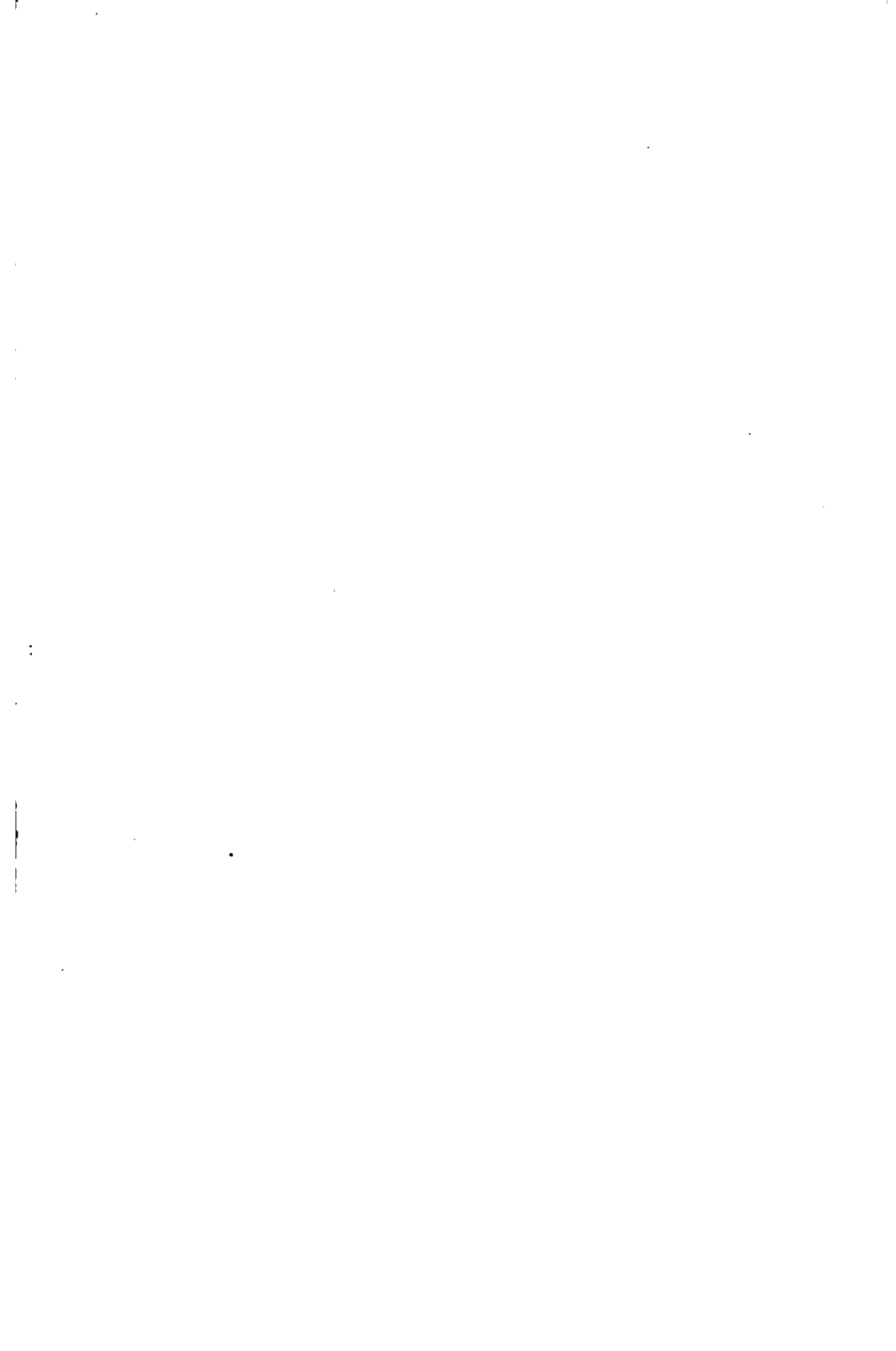
The Emperor, perhaps not quite taking in the import of this announcement, and perhaps thinking of his granddaughter's happy face, again waved his hand, and said: "'Tis no matter. You can easily arrange that," and thereupon dismissed the agitated young man. Of course, it is not every day that a young army officer has a Royal Princess thrust into his arms with an Emperor's blessing. So, naturally enough, the previous engagement was broken off, and the Archduchess Elizabeth made a *mésalliance*, as she had told me she would do. ✓

She and her husband began their married life in Prague, and later on went to live in Hungary. There they have settled down quietly and happily. For some time after I left the Court, I kept in close touch



From a photograph.

THE ARCHDUCHESS ELIZABETH.



with the Archduchess, but as her family cares increased, and new people and events occupied her time and interests, some years have passed since I last heard from her.

Upon the death of Pope Leo XIII. Monsignor Merry del Val was raised to the Cardinalate. In August, 1903, I received the following letter from Madame Merry del Val :

“ San Sebastian,

“ *August 15th.*

“ DEAR M.,

“ Our dear Archbishop has held a most responsible post as Secretary of the Conclave. Now he is acting by the Pope's desire as Pro-Secretary of State until a Cardinal is chosen to fill the post which was that of Cardinal Rampolla. But our Monsignor is not made Cardinal, and he hopes not to be. I feel that God will take care of him, otherwise I should worry sadly, for he *never* could stay on in Rome at this season without being ill. The new Pope is very like Pius IX. they say : he is very kind and, as someone wrote, ‘ If Leo XIII. attracted persons by his *intelligence*, Pius X. will do so by his *heart*.’

“ I have so many letters to answer that I must stop, and will only add that we are well, tho' we don't get younger !

“ Yours affectionately,

“ J. MERRY DEL VAL.”

Again, in 1904, I had a letter from San Sebastian, where the Merry del Vals had elected to live after the Ambassador's permanent retirement from the Spanish diplomatic service.

“San Sebastian,

“*March 15th.*

“MY DEAR M.,

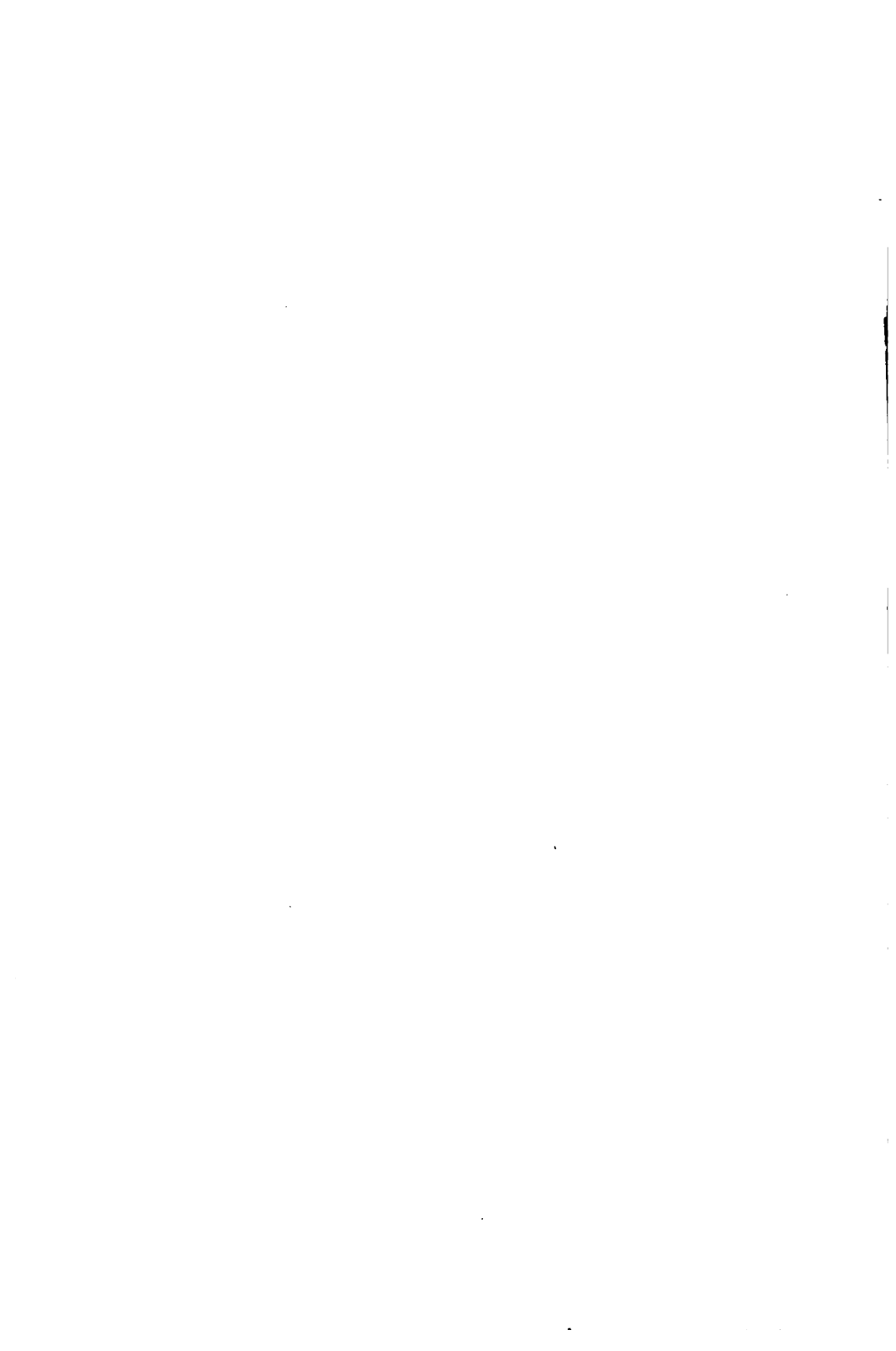
“I have been so sorry not to thank you for your kind Xmas greeting. I lost your address, which you did not repeat in sending this last line in December. So now I have to thank you again in honour of St. Joseph's Day. It is a great consolation to see how our Cardinal keeps well in health, tho' he is often very tired. I take it, that as he clearly arrived at his present post by a special disposition of God's Providence, he has, in a large measure, the grace and strength which he so much needs. He can write but very seldom, and, indeed, I would not wish him to do so often, knowing that the time he gives us is taken from the short hours of rest which he gets. Yet we hear from various people many details about him. He did write lately, and said he had been receiving visits from many of our Austrian friends, Lichtensteins, Auersperge, Windischgrätz, etc.

“We have had a severe winter here and have both been more or less poorly since January, but now we have better weather, and I hope the worst is over. We thought it wiser not to stay by our dear Cardinal



Cav. G. Ferretto, Treviso.

H.E. CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL.



just at first, as malignant tongues are apt to spread about false ideas of 'Spanish influence.' Later on we hope to return to Rome, as we so much long to do.

"Now, good-bye, my dear !

"Yours affectionately,

"J. MERRY DEL VAL."

The confidence of the Pope is not ill-placed in Cardinal Merry del Val, for, as a man, he is wise, true and honourable. As a priest he is remarkable on account of his spirituality and lack of worldliness. From a child he was pious and serious, and his mother's whole-hearted devotion always recognized his vocation for the priesthood. He was educated in England, but spent his student's life in Rome, and was thoroughly absorbed in its inner life. He received the title of Monsignor at twenty-seven, his whole youth being consecrated to his career. Tall, very handsome in the dignified Spanish way, he was much admired and sought after by Roman society. He was always ready to help in any religious difficulty, but was never drawn into the life of a worldly prelate.

He made his first deep mark at the Conference on the validity of the English Orders, and he never wavered in his conviction that the line had been broken, and that, from a Roman point of view, the English Church is heretical, not schismatical, as is the Russian Church. Pope Leo XIII. then sent him to settle the vexed question of Catholic schools in

Canada. His thorough knowledge of English and French was of great help to him on this mission, and his intervention was gratefully appreciated by the Canadians. Soon after his return to Rome, he was made Head of the Seminary for noble candidates to the priesthood in the Piazza di Minerva. This necessitated his giving up his spacious rooms in the Vatican, where he led a cloistered life, and coming into the vortex of the life of modern Rome. But his own personal life was as remote as before.

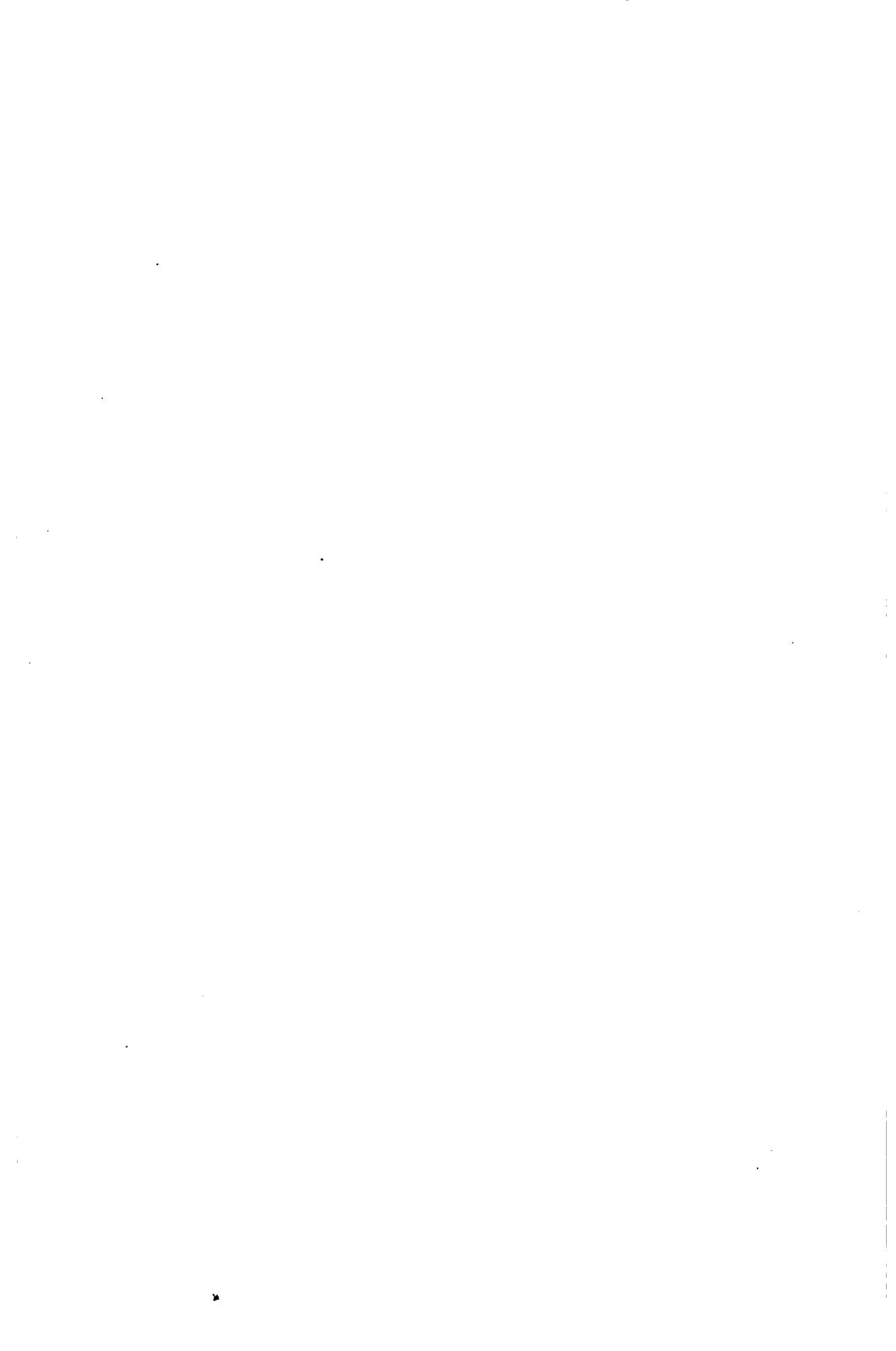
I was taken to see him once in the Vatican, and his reception rooms, the two outer ones, which was as far as a woman could hope to penetrate, were the most austere and uncomfortable I have ever been in. Red carpet chairs, stiffly ranged round the walls, books on the tables, and a few good pictures; that was all! Certainly no luxury there.

The Badenis I have seen at frequent intervals. Wanda, now the Countess Krasinska, lives happily in much magnificence in Warsaw, where I have visited her. Now, as I bring these recollections to a close, I see in my mind's eye the fair land of Poland. Not as it greeted me, green and fertile, brilliant in the October sun, but all laid waste and desolate. The military road over which I drove so often from Büsk to Lemberg, and from Lemberg to Büsk, again resounds with the pounding of horses' hoofs; but they are not the high-stepping carriage horses from the Badeni stables; they are the little brown horses of the Steppes, and carry the Cossacks from across



Wanda Krasinska
for my dear boy
1900

COUNTESS WANDA KRASINSKA.



the strip of neutral ground, no longer neutral, which we passed that never-to-be-forgotten day so many years ago. The carriages which rattle past the double-headed eagles of Russia and Austria are no longer luxurious victorias, but gun-carriages, bearing death and destruction. I think of the little deserted graveyard where the pigs rooted in the earth, and I wonder—is it full now with newly-made mounds? And I recall a conversation I had shortly after my arrival at Bűsk with the then Minister of Agriculture, who was staying there, and I can but wonder, had Count Badeni been allowed to remain at the helm of the Austrian ship of State, would it have sailed so swiftly into the rapids, where it bids fair to beat itself to pieces upon the rocks of German selfishness?

The Count Badeni died four years ago from a serious heart trouble, induced, no doubt, by the trials and troubles he had undergone; trials and troubles which ended in failure despite all his efforts. Now, when it is too late, Austria must see what she lost in this noble-hearted, upright and honourable statesman. Does the Emperor realize what he threw away?

And I see, too, the sad old Emperor, as I saw him beside the corpse of his beloved wife, and in his place in the chapel at Vienna, kneeling, lonely and alone: now his head is bowed by the weight of another decade, his heart by weight of many sorrows.

Then I think of that flower-wreathed window at Sásvar, amid the green hills and fertile plains of Hungary, where, the sunshine searching out the

stern lines in her withered, sad, old face, the Countess Karolyi sits, like Atropos of old, patiently weaving the threads in and out of her embroidery.

Her grandsons are fighting to-day to save the country she hates with a never-dying hatred ; fighting to save his Empire for the man for whom, in his youth, she had besought Heaven :

“ May his happiness be blasted.

“ May his family be exterminated.

“ May he be smitten in the persons of those he loves.

“ May his life be wrecked, and may his children be brought to ruin.”

Is she satisfied ? For the Karolyi curse has fallen. The Emperor Franz Josef sits alone at Schönbrunn.

THE END

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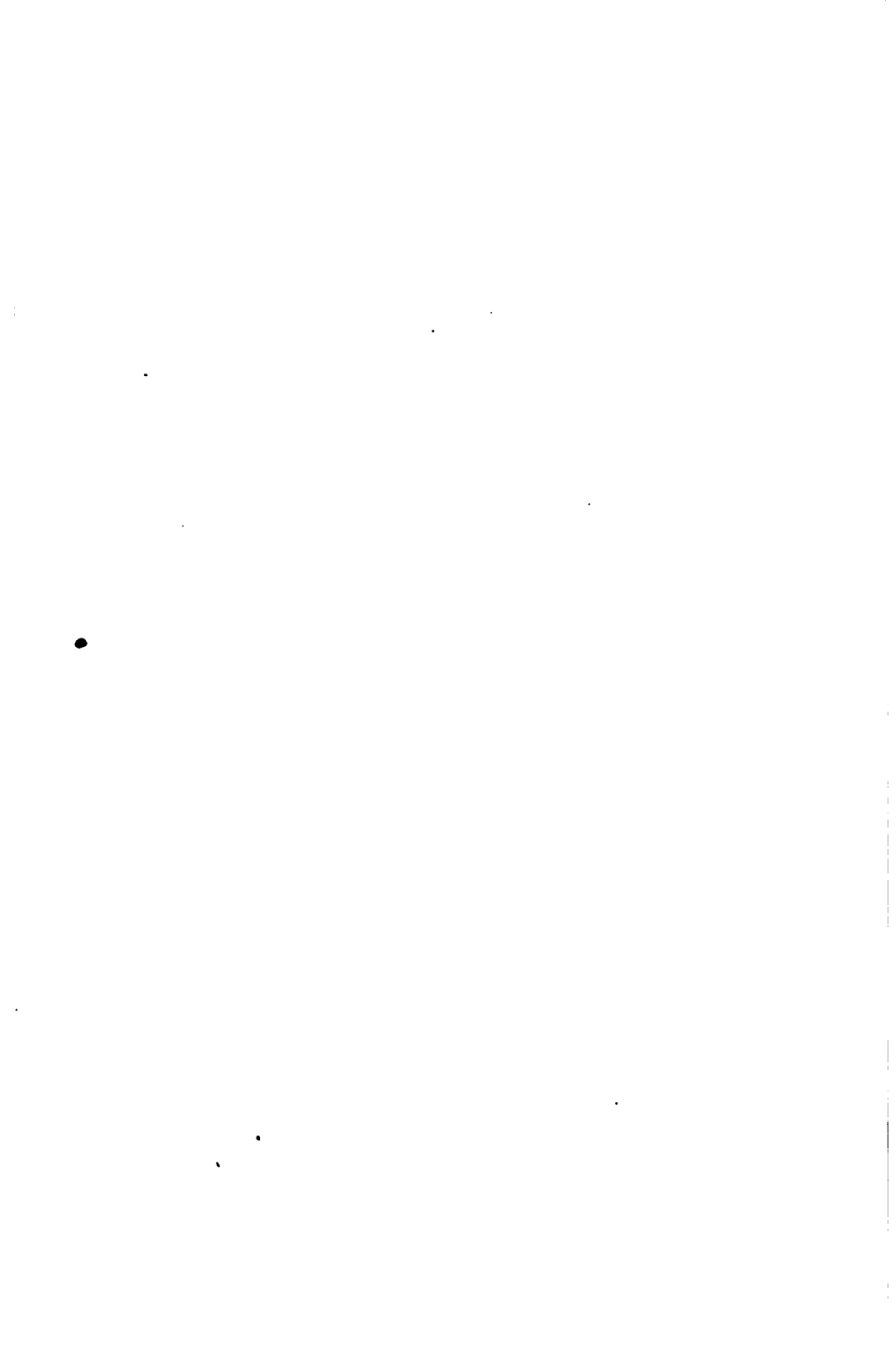
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